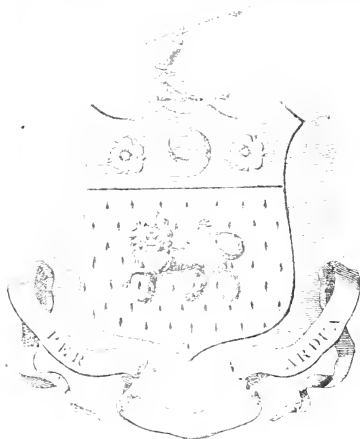
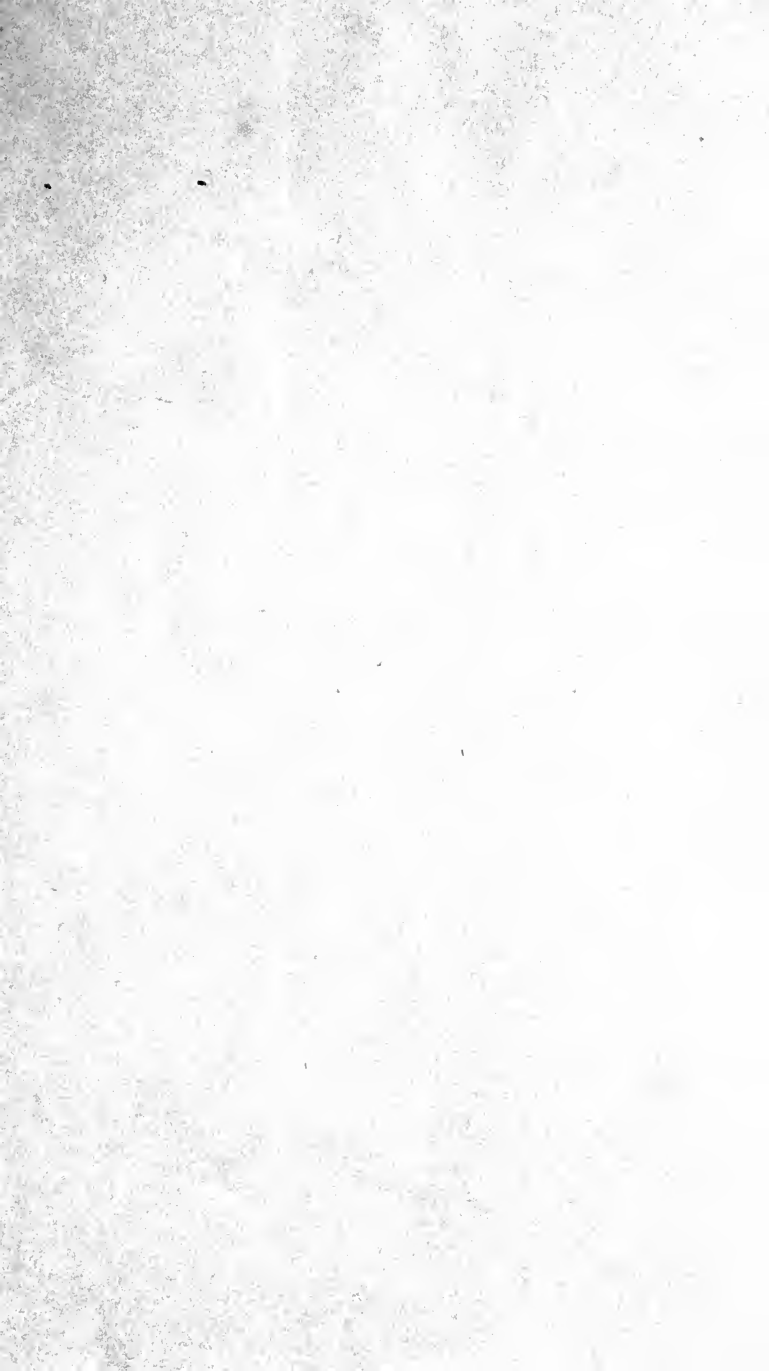


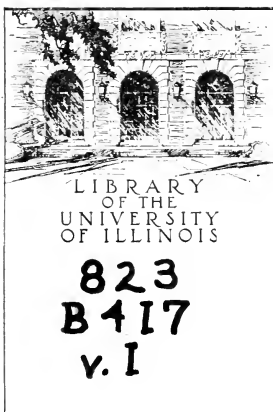
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BELLE GARDE,

THE

ADOPTED INDIAN BOY.

A CANADIAN TALE.

A quoi bon vous mettre en courroux,
Si vous reconnaissez vos traits dans quelque fable ?
Il n'est en pareil cas qu'un parti raisonnable ;
Ne dites mot :—corrigez vous.

LE BAILLY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON :

SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1832.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED BY LOW AND HARVEY,
Playhouse-yard, Blackfriars.

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INTRODUCTION.

OUR original intention was to deliver "Bellegarde" into the hands of our bookseller without a preamble, and we owe an apology to our reader for deviating from so commendable a purpose, more especially as the introduction may appear irrelative to the context. It is, however, called for by a recent publication, in which there are so many things at variance with what we have written, relating to the Americans, that it is incumbent on us to assert our title to veracity, although our work be

presented in the unauthentic, unpresumptuous form of a romance.

“ The fair authoress of “ DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS,” (we presume her to be fair, since she gets so frequently out of humour at being called “ old woman !”) will forgive us in favour of our common origin, if we declare, that, taken in a general sense, her work is nothing more nor less than a libel : we will not say, “ false, scandalous, and malicious,” because we address ourselves to a lady, and would not appear deficient in those paladine manners she so much admires. But she describes what she had not seen—good society ; and gives a picture of the American people, without including the New England states, that great, polished, cultivated, and learned portion of the nation, which extends from the east end of Long Island to the extreme boun-

dary of the district of Maine. She spent some three years in the western forests, and about as many months in scampering through the large cities, and a few of the populous states, which we have not been able to view and study sufficiently in ten years. And she modestly presents this flying sketch of her sickly fancy, as an accurate delineation of the “Domestic manners of the Americans!!” She “travelled from Dan to Beersheba, and found all barren.” She only saw a degenerate, degraded, vulgar race. We, on the contrary, found a people worthy of their noble origin, and proud too of being descendants of Englishmen, of speaking their language, possessing their literature, and being governed by the common law of England.

We do do not pass the sober limits of truth when we affirm, that the people of the New

England states are much more conversant with our best authors, than any equal number of the inhabitants of any part of the British empire. The cause is palpable: there are schools in every parish, maintained by a tax on property; so that the rich and poor, without distinction, give a good education to their children. There are a great number of farmers in every one of these States, who never employ an attorney or scrivener to make a deed of sale, mortgage, lease, or exchange of property; and it would be impossible to find among them, one man of full age and sound mind ignorant of the law of the land. A little serious reflection upon the forms of their governments will convince our reader that it cannot be otherwise. They are for the most part democracies: now ignorance, vice, and misery, in the mass of the people, would not allow such a form of government one

month's existence. Without equality of fortune, (taken in a concrete sense,) wisdom, moderation, and general learning, their social condition would be anarchy, pillage and rapine.

It is a new species of social combination, that has no prototype in ancient Europe, nor can ever be imitated in any population of the old world, unless some hitherto unknown calamity so reduce the number of inhabitants, that each one might have as much land as he could cultivate; consequently, all comparisons between America and the States of Europe are mere waste of time and words. To attempt any approximation would be as absurd as to extend the shores of Albion a thousand miles into the Atlantic.

The squeamishness of our lady-author may be dated from the moment she arrived in the muddy waters of the Mississippi, where she got out

of temper with mosquitos, who stung her into an acerbity of disposition that lasted some two years and a half, until it was suddenly mitigated by a comforting cup of tea at the house (mark reader!) *of a countrywoman of her own.*" Here then was found "balm in Gilead." This heart-softening visit to Stonington awakened long-lost sympathies; and "hogs, help, and equality," were forgotten.

Such is the nature of woman everywhere, when she consults her passions and prejudices. She is capable only of exaggerating, and *ayant jetté son bonnet par dessus le mur*, sticks at nothing.

We have here a new species of literary gladiator, who, with a reckless spirit, bids defiance to truth, justice, and criticism,

And runs an Indian muck at all she meets, provided they be Americans. Yet this "out

of the way curiosity" has become the lion of the passing day, just (and only) because party spirit renders the appetite for calumny keen and voracious.

That the immense surface of the United States is not peopled with what our countrywoman would denominate fine gentlemen, whose manners might charm the soft *habituée* of a Paris or London *boudoir*, ought only to surprise a traveller, who like Sir Fopling in the play, "STINKS OF SWEETS." To this insignificant race, "*an establishment*" would be more agreeable in the precincts of the Bois de Boulogne, or Regent's Park, than on the borders of (what our authoress calls) "*the eternal forests*;" for here she "found a rotten tree, that sunk under her weight," and threw her into an agony, that was not a little increased by the sight of "*Hogs fed and lodged in the*

prettiest valleys, and," worse still, "slaughtered beside the prettiest streams." God bless her (as the great agitator would say) for finding any thing pretty out of England. Her querulous disposition reminds us of Peter Pindar's "MARGATE HOY," where the fastidious Mistress Bacon, her exquisite prototype,

With fingers just like sausages, fat things,

scolded the captain, because he allowed the passengers to be sea-sick.

As to "*chewing tobacco and* (the inevitable result) *spitting*," we do not deny, that south of the Delaware, this custom is not unfrequent, even among the highest class of planters, who all plant tobacco where the soil is suitable. As Grumio says, "we confess the Cape;" but we peremptorily deny, that the well-educated and polite inhabitants of any of the large cities are

addicted to it. If there be exceptions, they are as rare as a wooden limb, or eyes that squint. Even smoking is less a general habit in the United States than in many nations of Europe. Our fair authoress is a lover of aristocratical customs. We sincerely partake of and commend her taste; but is she so utterly ignorant of what she so much admires, as not to know, that the most consummate aristocrats in Europe are the most inveterate smokers; or that the great Spanish aristocrat never gives his hand to be kissed, without communicating the condensed effluvia of at least fifty “long royales,” that he smokes every day before he gives audience to his adoring subjects?—So much for the south, *where lords and ladies smoke tobacco.*

In Germany, too, the meditative inhabitant, whatever be his rank, (like the English landlord with his ale,) eats his smoke, and drinks his

smoke, and lives on his smoke ; his pipe is only laid on the table when he goes to sleep. He seldom speaks, often grunts with satisfaction procured by tobacco, and “ haughty and huge,” would puff its noxious streams into the face of our authoress, if she should venture to approach him with any title implying less distinction than that of baroness,—to which we confess we hold her fairly entitled for her caricature of America. Should such a mark of distinction be generously bestowed upon her, we shall probably find her treating smoking and spitting with complacency, and forgiving, in the powerful and ancient HERZOG of Waldeck or Saxe Gotha, that which she censures in a republican of the United States.

Another mortal sin in her eyes is the constant occupation of the men, and the sewing and knitting propensities of the women of the

large cities in America. Why, the mother of Alexander, who wove tunics of wool for the conqueror of Asia, would be a vulgar *bourgeoise* in the presence of our fair countrywoman.—Then, forsooth, there are “so many different opinions, and the churches and chapels are so small.” To speak seriously, did she go to the country of “*eternal forests*” to seek cathedrals like those of York and Canterbury, and blame the pious who happen not to be members of the “Established Church?” This is tolerance worthy of Saint Dominick, and knowledge of the early history of the country, that would become a beadle of St. Pancras.

We admit that the men are all occupied, and that an idler would find it difficult to amuse himself in the United States;—but we did not expect to find a grave writer of tours find fault with men, among whom cannot be found

one who would maintain that the chief purpose of creation is to lounge in Bond Street, hunt at Melton Mowbray, and dance at Almack's. The productive occupation so censured in the men is the great element of national prosperity and general happiness; and we do not hold the American ladies cheap because they are not fond of gadding from post to pillar, and "*bearing false witness against their neighbours.*"

If the writer of "Domestic Manners of the Americans" only intended to make a caricature, she has succeeded. We assume no right to find fault with her plan; but we hold ourselves bound to enter our protest against such stuff passing current for conscientious narrative, sober history, or fair criticism. Perhaps the British public is even now of our opinion:—"*La raison se fait entendre,*" says Voltaire, "*quand les passions sont lasses de crier.*"

Sismondi, the most impartial of historians, affirms that no people is entitled to be called respectable; and yet the very concessions made to the Americans by those who dislike their form of government, might authorise us to assume, that they form an exception to the general rule. It is admitted that they are industrious, economical, and religious; that they have few, if any, paupers, and that such things as police and tread-mills are unknown even in the largest cities. But “they drink drams,” says our lady author. In the vicinity of mephitic exhalations only, tonics of this kind are in common use; but would not the mere duty paid in London alone on “BLUE RUIN,” furnish drams to the whole dram-drinking population of the United States? We put the question, not to our authoress, but to those who know anything about the matter.

The assertion that the Americans have shown little taste for monuments and the fine arts, is to a limited extent true. But is it in the “ASYLUM FOR OPPRESSED HUMANITY” that a traveller in his senses would seek Saint Peter’s Church, the Pantheon, or Westminster Abbey? Such monuments as the early Roman’s were proud of,—such as are COMMANDED BY UTILITY,—canals, roads, and aqueducts, are not rare in America. When they have the happiness to possess such a government as our authoress would fain give them, temples, obelisks, circuses, and hippodromes will be added.

The fable of a late president and his alleged weaknesses (were they even true) soils her book; and we blush at the disgusting picture she has drawn *con amore*. But what may not be expected from an author who refuses the

Americans the virtue of a common conscript called Courage? THIS IS TOO BAD; history refutes this calumny: but we are not writing an eulogium, and shall abstain from comparisons; besides, we cannot forget that we are defending the sons and grandsons of Englishmen; —that we are speaking of a mighty limb, cut by unhallowed hands from the parent stock, and planted in a rich soil, not yet watered with the tears of misery, nor “blessed with a national debt” that absorbs half its produce.

There are many customs in America very little to our taste; but civilization has marched with such rapid steps, that we are more inclined to praise the people for all they have done, than blame them for what may yet be wanting to attain that point of social perfection, which, after all, only exists in the dreams of honest men.

We conclude these introductory remarks with a word to indicate the main object of the following pages.

We have endeavoured to solve some important problems in morals, manners, and education. We censure without cynicism, and so far veil real characters in fiction, that lynx-eyed malevolence will lose its labour, in any attempt to designate them by their real names.

We have introduced LOVE, not merely because it is necessary to the dramatical interest of a novel, but because we paint it as it exists in pure and honourable hearts,—a sublime and powerful stimulant to virtuous and heroic actions.

London, September, 1832.

BELLE GARDE.

CHAPTER I.

There is an hour, when mem'ry's potent spell
Divinely opens death's long sealed bier ;
When those who ruled, or wrote, or nobly fell
In scenes of fancied life once more appear.

HAFIZ.

WHAT the moral killing spirit of the French revolution has left in a state of ruin of the once celebrated monastery of Royaumont, is placed in a retired valley between the ancient town of Luzarches (distinguished in the fourth century for the skill of its inhabitants in archery,) and the magnificent castle of the family of Condé, at Chantilly. This valley in

form of a large basin, is surrounded by the forests of Lys, Cernel and Bonnet, which cover the neighbouring hills. These forests are intersected in every direction with smooth avenues, for the convenience of amateurs of the chase and shaded walks; and as the soil is a dark sandy loam, absorbs rain as fast as it falls, and becomes more compact as the weather is more damp; lovers of nature and exercise find it agreeable at all seasons of the year. Two small rivers meander through this valley and meet at the wall of the monastery, to refresh and embellish its park, and then pay their joint tribute to the stately Oise.

At the meeting of these waters, the monks of Saint Benedict built a priory, dependant on the diocess of Beauvais. These rich and powerful ecclesiastics, made the most judicious selection of positions for their habitual resi-

dence : they were Sybarites in their mode of living, and could not be mistaken in what constituted material comfort ; they had abundance of wealth, and could purchase whatever the generosity of the monarch might fail to supply ; hence we find, that the ancient sites of their dwellings, are remarkable for the purest air, the richest soil, the finest fruits, and the fairest landscapes. All these are united in the secluded valley of Royaumont, where every object disposes the soul to repose and meditation. It would be interesting to remount to the first settlement of the monks in this place ; but too much obscurity envelopes their early history to permit us to give any other account of them than traditional tales ; and as we write an authentic history of real events, we only employ fiction, where we conceal names from a prying curiosity, that might

give pain, for which we should be responsible at least to our conscience.

In the *Gallia Christiana*, a work which is now very rare, we find mention made of “*Regalis mons*,” so named by St. Louis ; but in the learned work of the Benedictines, “*Gallia antiqua et civilis*,” as well as the researches of father Lebeuf, Herrissant and others skilled in monastic lore, we can find no trace of this interesting spot ; so that our readers must be content to know, that in the year of grace, 1227, St. Louis purchased the grounds and endowed the monastery with ample revenues ; and in order to render this act of piety more memorable, he summoned the feudal lords and barons of the realm, to witness the homage paid to religion, and the honours conferred on its ministers. The celebrated Ermingard, bishop of Beauvais, came to consecrate the

ground ; and the surrounding towns and villages sent forth deputations to assist at the solemn rite. These customs, and the piety that accompanied them, are far from our times ; we shall therefore give a brief sketch of the ceremony.

An immense number of tents and marquees, in form of a crescent, were pitched on the plain ; that of the king, over which the royal banner floated, divided it into two sections ; on his right and left, were placed the great dignitaries of the church and state. The feudal barons, in full armour, with their squires and pages, were placed according to their respective rank, and were known by their banners, livery and retainers, who were ranged in order of battle in front of their tents. A solemn music was heard from afar, swelling upon the light breeze ; it was that of the processions,

that approached preceded by troops of young maidens, dressed in white, bearing baskets of flowers on their heads. Next came the young men of the first rank in their respective villages, with uncovered heads, followed by their fathers and mothers. The deputations were under the direction of the clergy, who regulated the order of march and gave out the hymn, to which the multitude responded. Every cortege passed before the royal tent, and then placed itself at the extremity of the crescent, so that a circle of spectators enclosed the plain, in the centre of which the new monastery was about to be erected.

From the royal pavillion issued the pontiff, followed by the clergy in richly embroidered costumes, some holding in their hands vases of burning incense, others with branches of palm and vases of holy water. The children, in

white tunics, strewed the path of the bishop with flowers, as he passed in front of the assembled multitude, asperging them and pronouncing such blessings as are customary on the like occasions. The long and solemn array, having arrived in presence of the king, chanted a hymn of thanksgiving, and made way for the royal founder, who, in robes of state with the crown on his head, proceeded to lay the first stone of the church. The venerable bishop pronounced a blessing on the work, and dedicated it to the Holy Cross, as we find it recorded in the book already cited.

The three succeeding days were spent in festivity. The minstrels and musicians from the most remote provinces, from Languedoc, from Aquitaine, from the banks of the Loire, the Rhone, and the Garonne, followed their chiefs, to sing the praises of their houses, and

do honour to a ceremony in which St. Louis was the principal actor. We can easily conceive that the magnificence of the spectacle corresponded to the dignity of the monarch.

The partiality of the good king for this monastery was so great, that he remembered it in his will, and enriched its library with a portion of his vast and valuable collection of manuscripts; and Blanche, his queen, caused to be built in the vicinity a small castle, a tower of which now gives dignity to a modern house, the property of a man of taste and erudition, well known to the literary world as the “Hermit of the Chaussée d’antin.”

In this retreat, she retired from the cares and fatiguing ceremonies of the Court, to dwell with her own thoughts, and consecrate to heaven those hours which prepare the tired spirit for a future state, as well as give

it new energy to discharge conscientiously the duties of life.

The monastery of Royaumont was, from the period of its foundation, famous for the piety and talents of its chiefs; and bishops, cardinals and princes of the church, deemed it an honour to be thought worthy of having their names placed on the list of holy men, who were chosen to govern and direct the administration of its revenues.

At the commencement of the revolution, which destroyed not merely monks and monasteries, but declared religion to be a fable and virtue a delusion, we had the good fortune to become intimate with the last director of this establishment, and depository of his papers and manuscripts, a short time before he fell a victim to the political fanaticism of the Marats and Robespierres.

From these documents and personal knowledge of facts, we furnish this historical romance.

Our revered friend, FATHER ANATOLE, belonged as well to the aristocracy of nature as of society. He had all the exterior marks of personal superiority, a noble air, an elevated stature, a head that one might worship as a visible sign of deity. His learning was various, and his manner all dignity and benevolence; and such was his sedulous attention to the morals and well-being of the rude people, who lived in his dependence and cultivated the domains of the monastery, that misery was unknown to them: were they sick, he was their physician, for he had made medicine a favourite study; he was the enlightened and impartial judge of their disputes and strife, and none ever dreamed of appealing from his de-

cisions ; to the obdurate and refractory he was an object of terror, for he maintained, that clemency towards the incorrigible was cruelty towards the innocent ; so that those he could not reclaim by reason, justice and religion, he banished from his flock, in order that they might live in peace and enjoy the fruits of that order and industry he had made familiar to them.

Whilst he did so much for the comfort and ease of others, he was indifferent to all those enjoyments in which the monks of his convent indulged ; he slept on a bed of straw, ate sparingly of the simplest food, and only gave to nature the repose necessary to renewed exertions of active benevolence. While his brethren slumbered on beds of down, where there reigned that happy indolence so well painted by Boileau in the *Lutrin*, father Anatole

prayed or studied ; not a moment of his time was uselessly employed ; his fame was so well established, that his jealous brethren of the cowl ceased to cabal against him ; and the surrounding population blessed Providence for having placed them under the dominion of a man, who was a castle of refuge to the meanest and poorest among them, and a scourge to the wicked and disorderly. The origin of this distinguished person was a secret ; and whenever his curious neighbours sought to sound him on the subject of his birth, education and early habits, the only answer he gave was, that the faults and errors of his life admonished him to recur to them as rarely as possible. If he cared about what the world calls consideration, he trusted to his virtues and usefulness to obtain it. Many inquiries were set on foot by the gentry who inhabited the neigh-

bouring chateaux, to learn whether he was "well born," in order that they might find a rule to appreciate his worth; for they held, that although the son of a peasant might be entitled to their approbation, he could have no pretension to their esteem or respect. Father Anatole held their prejudices lightly; he neither courted the smiles of the great, nor the popularity of the vulgar; his "kingdom was not of this world," he was consequently independent of its frowns and its favours. As the austerity of his life repressed and discountenanced the levity and bad taste that was indulged in before the clergy, who were admitted to the tables of the nobility that inhabited the neighbouring castles, he was never invited to the circles of gay and dissolute society in the vicinity of Chantilly. It was however remarked, that he went every day to the

chateau of Baillon, which had been some years before purchased from the heir of the too celebrated Madame de Pompadour, by an aged lady, who, tired of the agitation and follies of fashionable life, and allured by the agreeable walks and rides in the forest, selected this spot for her habitual residence, and devoted all her time and attention to the education of an interesting boy, the only remaining member and representative of her ancient and respectable family. This lady, who was at this period past seventy, was not less than father Anatole an object of busy curiosity, on account of the secluded life she had chosen to lead, and the extensive works of charity she performed, as well as her intimacy with father Anatole, who gave to her and the child she had adopted, all the time he could spare from his ordinary avocations. Who the lady was,

who the child, or whence came the monk, no person could discover. The idle gossips speculated and conjectured *à perte de vue*, without being any wiser for their pains. What they could not discover, the curious reader will find in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.

CICERO.

THE lady of whom we have spoken in the foregoing chapter, was of the powerful and ancient family of Argenteuil, to whose ancestor Louis the Fourteenth granted large tracts of land in the province of Lower Canada. She had been educated in a convent in Paris, as was the custom with such of the Canadian gentry, as could afford to send their children to the mother-country. Even to this day, such families as entertain the hope of emancipating that por-

tion of North America from its dependence on Great Britain, avoid carefully every kind of alliance or community with the English settlers, whom they consider as intruders. In vain have gratuitous schools been formed in every populous parish on the borders of the St. Lawrence. In vain have places of trust, lucrative employments, and such other means, as are in the gift of the British government, been placed at the disposal of the old French nobility in Canada, in order to reconcile them to their new masters; they reject every thing that might wean them from their love of France; and fearing the influence that the English language and literature might exercise on their sympathies, affections, and morals, there is not one in twenty of them who will permit a word of English to be spoken in his family; so that Lower Canada is perhaps the

only spot on the globe, where can be found an unmodified specimen of what the French were in the days of Louis the Fourteenth. Without the power to expel the English, they obey their laws, pay the taxes, and adopt the Corsican maxim, "*hate and wait*" for an order of things more in harmony with their interests or their prejudices.

The family of D'Argenteuil, allied to the ancient Counts of Soissons, had always been at the head of the anti-English party; and they stood the more aloof, as their pride of ancestry could ill brook the airs of superiority the English traders assumed in all their intercourse with the conquered people; while on the other hand, these considered them as a pack of needy adventurers, without birth or education to justify their pretensions to distinction, and whose only motives for crossing

the Atlantic and fixing themselves in that rude climate, was to monopolize the fur trade, and exchange with the Indian tribes the refuse of Manchester and Birmingham manufactures, for the valuable skins of the beaver, the martin, the bear, and the blue fox. Moreover, it must be admitted, that these fur traders, whatever may be said in their favour at the present day, were not, at the period to which we allude, a very polished or conciliating people:—their object was gain; their pleasures, if they enjoyed any that merit the name, were those of the table; their conversation was limited to the news of the day, or local interests and rivalities; in short, they were of the cast “*that holdeth the plough, that glorieth in the goad, and whose talk is of bullocks.*” They had that kind of pride which money gives to men of low education; that is to say, they carried their

heads, rather than their hearts, very high, and laid claims to distinction, which the obscurity of their origin, enabled them to advance without much apprehension of being detected. Like most conquerors of a new world, from Christopher Columbus to the Caique of Musquito Island, they assumed a superiority over the subdued natives, equally ridiculous and impolitic; as it prevents that bland assimilation of the two people, so ardently desired by the wisest statesmen of the British empire.

With such society the Baron D'Argenteuil deemed it beneath his dignity to associate. We have often remarked, that although the urbanity of the French permits an apparent equality between the highest nobleman and his most humble neighbour, no people can more adroitly avoid, without giving offence, all contact with the vulgar. Tired and disgusted

with a state of society so little in harmony with his caste, D'Argenteuil determined to quit the city of Montreal, and fix his habitual residence on one of his larger estates. He had an only daughter, deprived by early death of her mother; and the fond father, clinging to this remnant of his ancient house, was desirous to devote the remainder of his life to her education and establishment.

He built a castle on the lordship of Saint Ann, near the lake of the two mountains, well known to transatlantic travellers for the beauty of the position and the commodiousness of the situation.

The site of the "Castle of the Lake of the Two Mountains," merits a particular description.—The lake, although large and beautiful, is only a magnificent incident in the course of the Black River, so called from the great depth

and purity of its water, which enters into a large basin formed by two hills on either side, and to the eye exactly resembling each other. The surrounding land is covered with lofty trees;—the oak, the sugar maple, the beautiful American elm, so well known for the grace and elegance of its form, mingled with a great variety of evergreens, give a peculiar majesty to the landscape; and although in most respects trees resemble one another every where, the amateur of these aristocrats of the vegetable world, perceives as great a dissemblance between them, as between human faces. In America too, nature seems to have formed every thing on a larger scale than in Europe; there, mountains, rivers, lakes and plants, are gigantic, compared with those of our country. The fertility of the soil, enriched during a countless succession of ages, by the constant

accumulation on its surface of the decomposition of its own productions, untouched by the hand of man, sends forth more vigorous plants than our exhausted fields. The great extent of the forests affords them on all sides repose and shelter from the action of the tempests; and this contributes to the great elevation and perfect proportions of the trunks of the trees throughout that vast region. There is in an American forest, amidst its gigantic foliage towering in the air, and the solemn silence that reigns in it, unbroken even by the song of birds, something that withdraws the soul from the vain illusions of the world, and delivers it to meditation and thoughts beyond the miserable horizon of which man is the centre. He feels how insignificant he is in the midst of the wilderness, in the presence of nature, where his habitual wants cannot be satisfied; and his

mind, reacting upon itself, makes him feel that dependence upon Deity, which is weakened or forgotten amidst the resources and tumult of a populous city.

The park and hunting grounds, which D'Argenteuil had designed for the use and ornament of his family residence, comprehended the lake, the two mountains that held it in its bed, a large quantity of cultivated lands and meadows, and a small village, dependant upon the domain of the castle; in all about twenty thousand acres. This village had in ancient times, ere a vessel had spread her sails on the St. Lawrence, or the foot of a white man trodden its borders, been the site of an Indian town. Laden with the spoils of the chase, a tribe of the Algonquin nation, whose hunting district extended itself nearly as far as Lake Ontario, arrived every summer and reposed on

this spot; and although the number of these aborigines be now reduced to a few families, from causes we shall hereafter examine, they continue to assemble at the same place every spring and summer, and subsist, during the cessation of the chase, on the fish of the lake and the Indian corn, which their wives plant and gather in from such fields as the present lord of the lake assigns for their use. When these families reach "*the field of repose*," after the fatigues of a severe winter, they deposit their skins and furs in the storehouse of a trader, who supplies them with a coarse blanket, a coloured cotton shirt, a quantity of bread, and ammunition to recommence the chase the coming winter.

Here the improvident Indian slumbers in a state of nullity during the summer months; he sees with indifference the white men till the

ground, build houses, enjoy property, taste the sweets of domestic comfort and family affections, and live in the midst of abundance; he neither envies their prosperity nor admires their skill; he will not make the least effort to better his condition; he permits his wife to labour to keep her children from starving; but he himself disdains the use of any implement except the gun, the arrow and the fishing hook. Every thing in his nature is passion; he does nothing with moderation; he either slumbers in sloth and apathy, like the snake when his appetite is satisfied, or when impelled by hunger, hunts with the ardour and activity of the wolf. Stripped by the white invaders of his ancient domains, he has sunk into a state of brutal stoicism, until roused by the call of hunger or war; and having by the introduction of fire arms lost his ancient skill in the usage

of the bow and arrow, he is in a state of irremediable dependence upon the fur trader, who may refuse him that ammunition, upon the supply of which his subsistence and that of his family depends.

The government of these growing colonies sends the Indians annual donations; not so much to keep them from perishing, as to convert them into obedient vassals in time of war; but these gifts often tend to destroy them, by affording them facilities to obtain ardent spirits, which they drink to excess, and die of the effects:—thus the liberality of the government is converted into poison, and decimates annually the Indian population, wherever it comes in contact with the children of civilization. Emigration from the British isles changes forests into farms; the swamp of the otter and musk rat is drained and converted into mea-

dow and pasture ground; the bear, the fox and the martin, escape into more savage regions, and the ancient inhabitants, deprived of that food which nature had placed within their reach, and unskilled in the ways of living of those who invade their territory, and whom they call their "white brothers," lead a wretched and degenerate existence, and perish in a state of misery, of which Rousseau was ignorant when he wrote his prize essay for the academy of Dijon: O! fiction! how seductive thy empire, how fascinating its inhabitants; but how far removed from sober reality and attainable happiness!

CHAPTER III.

O my good Gonzalo,
My true preserver, and a loyal sir
To him thou follow'st; I will pay thy graces
Home both in word and deed.

SHAK. *Tempest*, Act v.

D'ARGENTEUIL had been a soldier, and served under the banners of the unfortunate Montcalm, who, listening to the voice of his valiant spirit rather than his prudence, fell outside the walls of Quebec, which he ought to have remained within to defend with his feeble army: he had been a spectator of that conflict on the plain of Quebec, where Wolfe breathed his last word in the arms of victory;

he had seen his country pass under a foreign yoke; and upon every occasion had proofs of the zeal, courage, and fidelity of the Indian chiefs, who fought on the side of the French troops. Many of those who survived were of his own village and under his jurisdiction, for in those days "*haute and basse justice*" was in the hands of the seigneur of each district. Anxious to meliorate their condition, and feeling how much the mild lights of religion contribute to render man better, he caused a missionary church, with a suitable habitation for the clergy, to be erected at the little town of St. Ann. He endowed this pious establishment with a revenue, equal to the wants of such zealous ecclesiastics as might feel disposed to devote themselves to the religious and moral instruction of the youth of the Algonquin tribe. One of these priests studied their lan-

guage and taught them the catechism; another watched over the daily conduct of the families, gave them good counsel, and administered relief to such as were sick and unable to follow their kindred to the chase, during their winter excursions to the interior country; the most eloquent of the fathers preached once a week to the tribe, assembled in the church, and explained to them the Christian doctrine, and the importance of religion to their present and future happiness. Many of these savage men were reclaimed from the errors and vices that result from passion and instinct, unaided by reason and a belief in future rewards and punishments. These humane efforts were in the commencement attended with great success, and strong hopes were entertained, that order, industry, and the arts of civilization, might take root among them; but in propor-

tion as the white population increased in the neighbouring villages, and with that increase its concomitant evils, the Indians were not long in discovering that in practical, every-day morality, there was very little difference between their own notions of right and wrong, and those of the white people, who had from infancy been favoured with a religious education. They found among the children of civilization drunkards, liars and cheats, who stole their furs when opportunity served, or gave them in exchange for them damaged goods, which soon wore out, although the ignorant savage had given for them a commodity of an hundred times the value: in short, they violated all those obligations which the Indian had been taught to respect as sacred, and conformable with the new doctrines he had been commanded to observe. Finding themselves

“duped by the bad men who crossed the great lake, on purpose to diffuse comfort and light among them,”* they lost much of their primitive virtues, without putting any others in their place, and became infinitely more corrupt and degenerate than the worst tribes who had never received instruction. The missionary priests, however difficult they found it to reconcile their precepts with the practices of the white men, obtained from the young savages a great concession in the sacrifice of one of their favourite customs:—they ceased to torture prisoners of war, drink their blood, or scalp them when slain in battle. A few of the young men shewed great aptitude to learn whatever the missionary priests thought it expedient to teach them; and one of them exhibited such proofs of genius and elevation of

* Speech of Kahuta to Sir W. Johnstone.

feeling and sentiment, that he attracted the particular attention of his preceptors and the affection of D'Argenteuil. He learned to speak and write with ease and grace the French language; composed themes in verse that would have been cited as extraordinary proofs of poetical genius at a Paris college; and such was his docility and serious disposition, that he was selected from the multitude of boys who received instruction at the mission of St. Ann, to serve mass, wait on the priests, and take care of their wardrobe and the sacred vessels. He was confirmed at the age of fifteen, and D'Argenteuil, the better to commemorate the vigilance, fidelity and honour which had marked all his conduct, named him BELLEGARDE.

Nature had added to a mind so richly endowed, a physical organization equally remark-

able; he was tall, graceful, active and strong; he possessed, as the Indians expressed it, the "agility of the chipping squirrel," could swim like a duck, and run for hours together with the speed of a Canadian horse. The Indians were proud of his superiority; and lest he should leave them and become their enemy, concealed from him, as long as they could, his origin and birth.

Bellegarde was not of the Algonquin race. The territory which had been from time immemorial exclusively occupied by the Ontario nation, established on the banks of the lake so named, was some twenty years before entered upon by the young men of the Algonquins. The Ontario chiefs sent a deputation to complain of this infringement of an ancient right, but were treated with harshness and contempt. The winter following a similar aggression was repeated, and punished by a

general massacre of the intruders. The Algonquins, to avenge this act, mustered all their forces, and falling unawares on the Ontario villages, during the summer months, when no hostile expedition was expected, sacked and burned them all. The chief of the Ontarios, seeing his people destroyed, placed his only son, then an infant, on his shoulders, and attempted to escape to a neighbouring tribe, but a shot from a rifle brought him to the ground. The old Algonquin warrior who killed him unloosed the bands of deer skin which held the child to his body, and seeing a smiling and beautiful boy, without any symptoms of alarm, hold out his hands towards him, felt a movement of compassion, and, instead of striking him with his tomahawk, laid him on the ground whilst he scalped his father, then carried him to the women who had fol-

lowed from the lake of the mountains, and ordered him to be adopted into the tribe. He was brought up as one of his own children; and the boy only learned these particulars from the old cook at the house of the mission, who used to amuse him in the long winter evenings with such tales of war and adventure as children love to listen to. To his own tale he would seriously incline his attention; and, as if he meditated at some future time to return and reclaim his birth right, and gather together the scattered remnants of his race, he besought the old servant not to say to the Algonquins that she had disclosed to him the fate of his father.

Soon after he had been confirmed at the missionary church, D'Argenteuil took him into his service, to accompany him and his daughter in their excursions on the lake, and assist

in the amusements of the chase. His elevation to a post in the household of the baron, who was regarded by these simple people as next in rank to ("*their great father beyond the big lake*") the king, produced no jealousy among his companions. The young girls selected the finest skins for his mockasins, and vied with one another in embroidering them with porcupines' quills, steeped in the richest and most brilliant colours.

The baron held him too high to offer him a suit of livery, which, young as he was, he would probably have refused to wear, the Indian deeming every badge of servitude a degradation. A fancy dress, in shape and form not very unlike the simple costume of the Indians, was prepared for him. A cotton shirt, without a collar, a doublet of light blue cloth, plaited round the waist, and held with a long elastic worsted sash, and buttoned to the throat,

where it terminated in an embroidered collar; a copper bracelet round each wrist, and embroidered mockasins, distinguished Bellegarde among his red brethern. His dress descended just low enough to leave the knee and part of the limb naked, the Indian having the same objection to conceal his legs, as the Turks to have their beard pulled, or the Russian peasants to have their faces smooth, according to the ukase of the great Catharine. The daughter of the baron placed a long dagger in his "*ceinture*;" and when his long raven-black hair was braided, and hung as low as the border of his tunic, she fastened in it an eagle's feather, to supply the want of hat or cap, which nothing could induce an Indian to wear. Thus equipped, Bellegarde entered upon the important functions of body-guard and attendant to the baron and his lovely daughter.

The castle of D'Argenteuil, although a modern building, was surrounded with bastions and curtains, and its entrance secured by draw-bridges and portcullises, over a large fosse, through which a small river, descending from the neighbouring mountain, poured its stream, before it entered into the lake that bathed one front of the building. The entrance from the lake was through a lofty arched way, that admitted boats into the court, and might be closed at will by a falling iron grated door, moved up and down by a mechanical power placed in the corridor above. Although this elegant little fortress was without artillery, it might serve as a place of refuge to the inhabitants of the vicinity, in case of any hostile and sudden incursion of the Indians who inhabited the borders of the lakes Ontario and Erie. Such at least were the reasons given by the owner for making a fort without, as he

had made a castle within; nevertheless, many people gave it as their opinion, that a love of feudal splendour entered into his project.

The family of the old Canadian nobleman, was composed of his sister, a widow lady, who did the honours of his table, his daughter Matilda, then in her seventeenth year, a domestic chaplain, father Le Clerc, whose learning and abilities not being seconded by the protection of any powerful nobleman or high dignitary of the church in France, of which country he was a native, induced him to accept an offer made to him by the relations of D'Argenteuil, to remove to the colony and assist in the education of the young heiress. A professor of music and drawing, completed the circle of this happy and affluent family.

D'Argenteuil lived in as great splendour as a new country could admit; his revenues were derived from mutation fines, equal to ten per

cent. upon the value of every sale of real property, made by the inhabitants of his vast estates, and an annual rent of lands, let to farmers in the vicinity of the castle. The Indians furnished venison and game from the forest, and fish from the lake; and the house of D'Argenteuil was the abode of abundance and hospitality. The needy found relief at his gate; the oppressed protection; the gentry of the colony, with their families, came at stated periods, every year, to pay him a visit, and his dependants looked up to him as a father and a friend. In his youth he had lived much in the gay society of Paris, had perused with advantage to his heart and morals the great book of human life, and sought the shade in his declining age, that he might prepare himself to quit the scene where he had acted his part with dignity and honour.

CHAPTER IV.

Chi ha piu d'orgoglio e meno d'umanita,
Che un sciocco felice ?

Italian proverb.

SOME fifteen or sixteen years after the period when the voluptuous and inglorious Louis XV. had ceded the Canadas to Great Britain, a sort of provincial Court was held at Quebec. It has been a favourite custom for that nation to “ give just notions of its power by the splendour of its representatives in foreign countries ;” * and although the advan-

* See Lord Castlereagh's speech on the budget of 1816.

tages of such prodigality of the national fortune are very questionable, it is not probable it will be discontinued, so long as the aristocracy have children to saddle upon the productive sources of the state, daughters without portions to bestow on men in place, and dowager mothers to pension, under the head of "rewards for eminent services."

In conformity with this ostentatious spirit, a Governor-General, with a large salary was appointed to reside at Quebec.

It was natural to presume that the Canadians could not easily forget that they were Frenchmen, and that the humiliating treaty of 1763 could not convert them into Englishmen. In order to insure their obedience, an imposing military establishment surrounded the colonial governor, while orders were given to conciliate the great landed proprietors, by ap-

pearing to consult them on matters relating to the local interests of the country. This was the origin of what is still called the "Colonial Council;" it was a faint imitation of the policy of the famous Cardinal de Richelieu, who obliged the nobles to live at Court, in order that they might ruin themselves, and become dependant on the Crown for places and pensions, while this mode of living lessened their influence over the people they were in the habit of governing and protecting.

Fortunately for the liberty of the Canadian people, the British government did not select Richelieus to govern them; and if D'Argenteuil entertained any apprehensions of inroads being made upon the rights and independence of his countrymen, they were soon dispelled by a close investigation of the new governor, who invited him to visit the seat of govern-

ment as a member of the provincial council. This very important personage was the natural son of a Scotch duke, who when a school-boy, had an unlucky intrigue with a Molly Segrin of the village border, the offspring of which, he in due time converted into an officer of an infantry regiment, and pushed forward in life by that kind of influence, on which alone depends the success and advancement of men in the civil and military departments of the state.

When Sir Crowdie Mac Grosgrutt was named to the post of governor, with a civil list of ten thousand pounds a year, by way of indemnity for the coldness of the climate, he was much advanced in years. He had been long employed in warm climates; and as the health of old bachelors gains little by such service, he brought to his new appointment a

shattered constitution, the peevish and irritable humour of incurable infirmities, and the haughty port and contumelious manner, which weak men employ as a mask to cover ignorance and incapacity. We have already remarked upon the stuff of which at that early period, the English population was composed in Lower Canada; that of Quebec, was made up of people from the highlands of Scotland. They were true "children of the mist," few of them being able to make themselves understood in plain English. The levees and dinners of Sir Crowdie were a little like those of Damocles, for, with the exception of the secretary and staff officers, no person breathed but in monosyllables; and the only sounds that were heard at his festive board, were the moving of plates and dishes; but if the "feast of reason" was wanting, the proud host had the sa-

tisfaction of seeing his viands and wine disappear like enchantment. The author of the "*Almanack des Gourmands*," would have clapped his hands with joy, at the sight of such redoubtable trencher-men, whose digestive powers had not in youth been impaired with high living. They ate and drank as loyal subjects ought to do at the vice-regal board; and if there were no French inhabitants present, most cordially damned the Canadians, "*for wearing wooden shoes and calling hat chapeau.*"* Indeed they had nothing else to allege against that happy and simple people, who justly appreciating their position, carefully avoided every occasion of giving offence to the friends and countrymen of "HIS AGENCY."

* This is as good a reason as national prejudice can well offer for national dislikes.—ED.

At these reunions, (rather than society,) the little, fat Sancho-like chief, paid no attention to his guests ! the favour he conferred by inviting them to his house, was in his opinion, an act of condescension which dispensed with all further ceremony. His principal attention was bestowed upon a little favourite pug-dog. When the dishes were removed, the major-domo always placed this animal before his master, and nothing could equal the smiles, caresses and compliments he received from the guests. He marched round the table, wagged his tail, and lapped a little wine out of the glasses of those who sought the approbation of the master, by indulging the favourite. If any fastidious guest showed reluctance to *lap out of the same can* with the dog, and called the servants to change his glass, you would suppose that some outrageous

act of ill breeding had been committed ; the governor bridled up, his aid-de-camp murmured, the secretary moved about upon his chair, as if he sate on lighted coals, and a dead silence ensued, until the governor rose and gave the signal to retire to the drawing-room.*

The persons who were guilty of *leze canini* usually slunk behind and escaped unobserved ; and it required a long penitence and *amende honorable* to be replaced on the eating and drinking list of the chateau. D'Argenteuil had been a spectator of some of these official dinners, and a few days before his return to his family, received a farewell invitation to one, at which was assembled all the good company of the city. From the hotel where he

* Although we have placed this scene at Quebec, we have only changed the name of the town ; it was an every-day occurrence at the table of a Mr. Gore, deputy governor of Upper Canada, whose residence was at Kingstown. "What," says Junius, "must be the congregation, when a monkey is the high priest."

lodged to the government-house, the distance was not more than a few hundred paces : but the obstacles that were to be surmounted on the way, became a work of time and labour, owing to a tremendous gale that blew the loose snow into heaps. To move about in a carriage was impossible, and to proceed on foot a matter of no small difficulty. In some places, there was a snow drift of four or five feet deep, in others less, but the whole surface of the *Place d'Armes* was kept in motion by the action of the storm. Such events are common in this rude climate; and as they are foreseen, the inhabitants are prepared for them.

When a Canadian is full dressed, he draws a pair of coarse woollen stockings over his legs, made on purpose to cover them as high as his waist; he covers his head, ears and face with a fur cap, then wraps his body

in a large pelisse, and thus equipped wades as he can from one place to another, too happy if he be not smothered in a snow drift, or does not find his nose frozen before he reach the destined point.

As misfortune has need of company, D'Argenteuil was glad to find a companion at the hotel where he lodged, who had received an invitation to dine with the same society. The landlord engaged them to keep together and assist each other on the way. The storm howled, and blew volumes of snow with great violence in their faces as they proceeded ; and so difficult did they find it to buffet the waves of snow that rolled over them, that they were compelled to stop and turn their backs to the gale, in order to breathe, after advancing a few steps. But the companion of D'Argenteuil was young and strong ; he held the old nobleman by the arm, and

after a sharp struggle reached the governor's door. They soon cast off their "*snow-dress*" in the anti-chamber, and the footman having demanded the name of the stranger, the Baron D'Argenteuil learned that he was in company with Captain De Courcy, of the 10th Regiment of foot.

Their names being announced several times from the anti-chamber to the drawing-room, they made the ceremonial bow to his excellency, and retired into the circle that stood at a respectful distance from his chair. D'Argenteuil then turned to his companion to thank him for the aid he had given him to overcome "the pelting of the pitiless storm." This was done in tolerably good English, to which the stranger replied in French, with ease and dignity, and a deference in his manner towards the old baron, that inspired a

favourable opinion of his good breeding and benevolence.

“ Your name, sir,” said the baron, “ and the facility with which you express yourself in my language, would dispose me to believe, that I have the honour of addressing one of my countrymen, if I had not perceived you in the uniform of a British officer.”

“ My name and family are of French origin ; my ancestors inhabited the banks of the Seine, and accompanied Duke William to England ; but since the chivalrous days of Richard the Lion-hearted, we have lived in a southern province of Ireland.”

“ It is of ancient date, Captain De Courcy ; I fancy you will not find many in this group who can trace their family to so remote an epoch.”

“ I am a stranger to the society, baron ; I dine here for the first time.”

“ And I,” said the baron with a sigh, “ although a native of the colony, scarce know the names of three persons in the room.”

When dinner was announced, the two strangers (attracted perhaps towards each other by those congenial sympathies which the great German author, Goëthe, in his work on affinities, considers as the source of all our actions,) remained together, in order to cultivate an acquaintance commenced in the snow-storm.

The governor was flanked by two brilliant dames from Glengarry, with rosy faces and rosy arms. As they spoke English but “ indifferently well,” they were like two vases of flowers on a parterre, more for ornament than utility ; but they were the wives of two persons of importance to the rising commerce of the colony, a fur merchant and a dealer in masts and spars for “ the wooden walls of old England.” We have already said that these

state dinners were too stately to be very gay. Silence was once broken; but it was owing to the favourite dog, who in passing before De Courcy, stopped to drink out of his glass and upset it, half filled with wine, on the tablecloth. De Courcy pushed him gently away, and provoked an impertinent question from the host, who was displeased at the indifference paid to the canine favourite, or else at the stain occasioned by the spilling of his claret. Darting a fierce glance at the young soldier he demanded, (on purpose, no doubt, to embarrass him,)

“ Pray, sir, where have you been brought up?”

“ In my father’s house, sir, where there is a clean table cloth every day,” was the only satisfaction Sir Crowdie received.

The ladies burst into a roar of laughter,

and the ill-timed mirth increased not a little the embarrassment of the company, from which they were released by his excellency beating a retreat to the drawing-room, where, after a few significant nods of protection to the chosen few who were blessed with his intimacy, this grave magistrate withdrew. “ *The cares of state* forbade him to waste his time in social pleasures, or perhaps the “ *dignity of office,*” admonished him not to condescend to familiar intercourse with people who might think a kind word was a title to ask a favour. The etiquette did not permit the company to remain many minutes in the drawing-room after the retreat of the master of the feast; and as De Courcy had not the good fortune to please, neither the colonial secretary, nor the staff officers condescended to pay him those attentions which are due to a stranger

who happens for the first time to have a claim on hospitality and benevolence; as soon therefore as he saw signs of impatience in the looks of the baron, he proposed to him to retrace their steps to the hotel where they lodged. The baron, charmed with his new acquaintance, invited him to pass the evening in his apartment, and learning that the young officer was on his way to join his regiment, then quartered at Montreal, he proposed to him to take a place in his *cariole*, which was accepted with pleasure. It is now time to make our readers acquainted with Captain Eustace De Courcy; and to his introduction we shall appropriate a portion of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Non, je ne suis point faible assez,
Pour regretter des jours steriles,
Perdus bien plutôt que passés
Parmi tant de peines inutiles.

Old Poetry.

DE COURCY was now at that happy age, when the emotions of the soul are active and tumultuous, when the living sources of sentiment and joy flow with impetuosity, when men feel profoundly the impression of every object with which they come into contact, and see every thing with an interest, which becomes calm as they advance in life. In a word he was only twenty-two years old. He had

letters to several officers of the staff of the governor, which their conduct towards him at dinner and in the drawing room, induced him to throw into the fire in presence of D'Argenteuil, when they were together at the hotel; and in proportion as his disgust of his countrymen and their servility of spirit increased, his attachment to the kind, urbane, gentleman-like old nobleman grew warm.

But it is necessary, to the satisfaction of at least one third of our readers, that we speak of his family before we describe his merit; and even the other two thirds, provided he have inspired them with the least interest, will not be sorry to learn, that he was of a noble and ancient family, whose fortune by no means corresponded with its military renown, at those periods of our history when courage and virtue and physical strength were causes

of illustration. De Courcy was the youngest of seven children. The small remnant of the ancient possessions of his father, was entailed on the eldest son; and the younger brothers were left to shift for themselves as they could, some in the army, some in the navy, and those of a less enterprising spirit, in professions where more money and less glory are obtained.

His father, the Earl of Groveland, married a second time late in life; Eustace was the offspring of this union; and as the Earl was impoverished by the efforts he had made to establish his other sons, he had scarcely sufficient income to keep up a modest establishment at the birth of his last child. He therefore resolved to educate him at home, watch the development of his faculties, and study his disposition, before he decided upon a suitable profession for him. He had lived

long, and carefully observed the influence of different modes of education, on the success and happiness of young men, in their progress through life. “Useful friendships,” he would say, “are formed at public schools and colleges, and emulation, when the object is praiseworthy and honourable, is a strong and constant incentive to exertion and industry; but has emulation always a laudable object in view? are there not equally struggles between boys, who shall be most daring in vice and insubordination? Besides, it is extremely doubtful, whether emulation, so much eulogized, be not a source of permanent evil; it renders the most highly gifted vain, intolerant and ambitious, insolent, proud and turbulent; and these defects, though accompanied by great personal superiority, render men more frequently a scourge than an ornament to

society. Ambition is cultivated as a means of happiness; but it seldom produces in the breast of the man who possesses so pernicious a gift, any thing but discontent, disorder and disappointment. Cæsar called it the “malady of a great mind;” and it is that malady which has given to the world conquerors, tyrants and demagogues, but has rarely advanced the material interests of mankind.

If we could distinguish in the early dawnings of genius and intelligence, the moral direction they receive in after life; if we could select from the mass of boys, such as are destined to govern states, maintain their institutions and defend their liberties, means might be taken to inspire them with a useful ambition; but to excite it in every one, to make it the prime mover of their actions and desires, is to give to every boy his companion for an enemy or for a slave.

Those who cannot raise themselves by their talents, seek distinction by qualities that degrade humanity; by flattery, hypocrisy and baseness; they hate those who stand in their way, and injure them by all the means that virtue and honesty reprove; hence those dispositions that render men unhappy and contemptible through life, are warmed into activity by a silly rule, that cannot receive a just application to a multitude of boys, of different powers and faculties derived from nature and constitution. But such is the rage for being classical, that we have borrowed from the Greeks, that very emulation, which making it the duty of every one to endeavour to surpass others, rendered them all egotists from the earliest period of their existence; was the cause of the broils and dissensions with which their history is filled; and which

ended in their destruction and subjugation. Like them our education only fits men for war ; as if we stood in need of nothing but heroes and gladiators ; and in our youth we have seen mothers, whose boys were destined to be grave magistrates, pious clergymen, and professors of the useful and ornamental sciences, looking with complacency at the “ *whiskers*” they gave each other in the academies of Jackson, Gully, and Belcher.

The greatest men of Europe have not been thus educated ; Milton, Shakspeare, Bacon, Locke, Newton, Descartes, Montaigne, Voltaire, and Rousseau, were not thus instructed ; nor did the greater part of them owe any part of their celebrity to what we call a public education. The time a boy spends at a public school, is the most wretched period of his existence ; his brain is fatigued with grammar and Latin,

and logic, which are fixed in his memory by blows and tears and suffering; in short, he goes through his *humaniores literæ*, with as much pain as a galley slave performs his quotidian task, with the additional irksomeness of understanding more imperfectly the labour assigned to him; and this too at an age, when his reason is incapable of comprehending any thing complicated or abstruse.

“Of the benefit of words,” says a writer of celebrity, “no one will think lightly; but words are often used without thinking.” Old as we are, we sufficiently remember the hardships of attending to what we did not understand, and acquiring what we did not value, and which we could not possibly imagine to be of any use, but to furnish occasion for reproach and chastisement. Distinct ideas of prepositions alone, are only to be expected from deep reflection

and mature study ; and when compounded, require in their just application, all that vigour of intellect, which the common school boy does not possess when he touches the age of manhood."

These reflections determined the Earl of Groveland to adopt a different plan for the education of Eustace. A good master was engaged to teach him the common rudiments of the English tongue, and give him a sufficient knowledge of arithmetic and mathematics ; the earl taught him (as Johnson says of Shakspeare) just Latin enough to grammaticise his English and aid him in the study of French and Italian. In the intervals of mere efforts of memory, his mind was relieved with history, geography, general notions of chemistry, geology and botany ; and all these were instilled into the memory, without imposing any rude task that might disgust or

fatigue the pupil. The exercises necessary to possess *mens sana in corpore sano* were not forgotten. The principal occupation of an Irish country gentleman, besides quarter sessions and grand jury meetings, is hunting and shooting; and at fourteen Eustace was an excellent horseman, cool, skilful, and resolute. He had been taught that fear was an element of danger; and he astonished his companions of the chase, by his self-possession in difficult situations, and his address in extricating himself. He loved shooting not so much from a taste for "*la petite guerre*" as the excitement it gave him and the opportunity it furnished of expending in long and painful marches that superabundance of life which nature had so liberally bestowed upon him. Constant occupation made his days pass unobserved; and his evenings were devoted to reading and con-

versation with his highly gifted and intelligent parents: while his father gave him philosophical views of the phenomena of nature and the mechanism of society, his mother developed in him that "instinctive power, active and strong, and feelingly alive to each fine impulse" called taste.

At the age of seventeen he was sent to St. Omer to learn to speak French, to dance, and to fence; and his time, up to nineteen, had been so well employed, that he was farther advanced in *useful and disposable knowledge*, than are the greater part of men at twenty-five. He only lacked the usage of courts and camps to make him a living and faithful representation of that perfect character that Addison calls a fine gentleman: for religion, that rarest ingredient in the catalogue of common accomplishments, was not wanting.

For this blessing he was indebted to the precepts and example of his mother. In the progress of a long and eventful life, he would often recur to the influence this refined and enlightened woman had exercised over his early sensations: what man, he would say to himself, who feels his heart beat high at the call of virtue, or finds the tear of delight start into his eye at the recital of a noble, generous, or heroic action, cannot refer whatever is good in him, to the warm and gentle influence of a good mother; sensibility, delicacy of taste, courage without ferocity, resignation, so necessary in the painful and thorny path of existence, all, all these flow from that holy and sacred source.

“ Il faut que l’immortel qui touche ainsi notre âme
Ait sucé la pitié, dans le lait d’une femme.”

DE LA MARTINE.

CHAPTER VI.

I rather would entreat thy company,
To see the wonders of the world abroad,
Than living dully sluggardized at home,
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN Eustace returned from the continent to his father's house, he was every thing his parents could desire. He spent a winter at home, and was admired by all the neighbouring gentry, for the grace and dignity of his manner, as well as the goodness of his heart and the devotion of his sentiments; he alone seemed unconscious of his personal superiority.

It was painful to separate himself from his

family, who had been his preceptors, friends and companions; but it was necessary to make choice of a profession, and enter upon the career of life. His inclination was consulted, a commission obtained in the fortieth regiment of foot, commanded by an old friend of his father, and preparations made for his departure. Two of the best horses were selected from his father's tenantry, who were all anxious to "sell at his own price to the dear young master," who had been from infancy an object of respect and affection.

Those who are acquainted with the enthusiasm that glows in the bosom of Irish peasants, will readily conceive the alacrity with which they seek to render themselves useful to those who treat them with kindness and inspire in them either attachment or admiration. "The horses will not be soon paid for," said old mother Holdbrook, "but

it's all one for that; sure it's for the son of the good ould stock, and the blessin of God be wid im; and you, Bill, you are his foster-brother, my jewel; and see that you sarve him well, and keep yourself out of harm's way. So, now go to mass, and get a mouthful of prayers, and ask a blessin of father Coolaghan before you start."

There is (we forget in what book), a very pretty description of the departure of the young Terrail, afterwards the Chevalier Bayard, from his father's house in Dauphiny. His father bestowed on him his best palfry, and did him the honour of buckling on his gilded spurs; his mother tied on the embroidered scarf; his sword was girded on by an old uncle, who had been distinguished as a good man at arms; and the bishop of Grenoble, his maternal uncle, pronounced a pious

benediction on the equipped and valiant page, as he set forth on his journey. Something like this took place when Eustace De Courcy left that sacred home, which he was never more to behold; and amidst the tears and blessings of the assembled multitude, bade them farewell.

He journeyed with a heavy heart, followed by Bill Holdbrook, his foster-brother, in a neat but simple livery, and mounted on the inferior nag of the two, that had been bred on the farm his father held on the estate of the old lord

Eustace was received by the officers of his regiment with all the cordiality he could desire, and applied himself with sedulous attention to learn the duties of an officer, of the importance of which his preconceived notions were singularly exaggerated. Besides the mecha-

nical affair of manœuvring, and administration, (which he had studied in France in a military school, where a young man goes regularly through every grade, from the private soldier to the commander of a regiment, before he can pretend to enter into the line as an ensign), he had supposed that the elementary rules of the military science would be studied and practised in the exercises of the garrison. In this he was disappointed: he soon perceived that any man, who had money or interest to obtain a commission, and courage enough to execute blindly and ignorantly the orders of his superiors, was deemed fit to be an officer:—science, knowledge of details, acquaintance with languages in which are found good works on the art of war, a facility in sketching positions and marking out an encampment, were all as unnecessary to a British officer as to a fashionable

tailor:—to dress well, lounge about the streets, make love to the chamber and shop maids of the town, eat good dinners, and sit late at the mess table, with an occasional bout of sparring and fencing, were the only qualifications necessary for “the defenders of the country.” Knowledge was voted a bore, learning pedantry, and writing a legible hand declared to be ungentleman-like. This idle, sauntering, time-killing existence, was not suited to the ardent spirit and solid judgment of our hero; he grew sick of it at the end of a couple of years; and having an opportunity of purchasing a company in the tenth infantry, then stationed in Canada, he availed himself of it, and landed at Quebec a few days before that on which he became known to the Baron D’Argenteuil.—We now return to our narrative.

The morning after the dinner at the house

of Governor Mac Grosbutt, De Courcy received an invitation from the baron to breakfast in his apartments, in order that they might arrange the details of their journey to Montreal.

“ You are going to be my travelling companion, sir,” said he, addressing himself to Eustace, “ in a rude climate and at a very inclement season: you will, perhaps, trust to my experience to render it as agreeable as possible.”

“ I have only thought of the excessive rigour of the weather and the fatigue of travelling as they might incommode you, my lord. I have a large stock of youth and health, to enable me to bear the hardships and privations inseparable from my profession; besides, if you can resign yourself to support, without murmuring, the inconveniences of rough roads,

bad inns, and jaded horses, it would ill become me to complain of them."

"I am glad to find so much practical philosophy in so young a man : yet I shall so manage matters, that you will have little occasion to call it to your aid. Our cold atmosphere must appear tremendous to a native of a temperate climate ; it has not, however, the inconveniences attached to the winters of England and France, where you have sometimes an Italian morning and a Swedish evening ; sudden changes, for which you are always unprepared. Here, on the contrary, our cold and warm seasons are uniform, and every thing is ordered accordingly. Our horses, of the old Norman race, are small, strong, fleet and vigorous ; our cariole (light covered sledge) lined with wolf and bear skins, is as tight and more proof against cold, than a Paris chariot ; as to

rough roads, we know not the inconvenience of them in Canada; for as the snow lies frozen on the ground, at least four months of the year, our path will be as smooth as a polished mirror, and we shall slide over the surface like a birch bark canoe on an unruffled lake. The air is tonic and disposes our people to sing, dance and play. During the winter months, they visit and feast at each others houses. Their lands are rich and produce abundant crops; the rivers and lakes teem with various kinds of excellent fish; and our poorest peasants have venison and wild geese on their tables. They are a happy, industrious, moral race; receive religious instruction from their priests, who are their parents and friends; pay only a small "*redevance*" (mutation fine) to the lords of the soil upon the transfer of property; and having no motive to commit crimes

of any kind, are more exempt than any people I have known from the evils that afflict and demoralise society. Up to the present moment, it has been the policy of our conquerors to leave us free from taxes; and a wise policy it is; since an honest hard working man, can with difficulty comprehend, why a large portion of his labour should be given to those who govern him. Our people have native magistrates to see the laws duly executed; they are left in the undisturbed enjoyment of the religion of their fathers; and only see the strong arm of government, in the occasional passage of troops, from one principal town to another."

" You are then, my lord, in a very different situation from that of many other conquered portions of the British empire; the land of my fathers, its prosperity and tranquillity, are

quite as important to that island called England, as the population of half a million scattered over this vast colony at such an immense distance; and yet the mode of administering the laws, has a very different tendency: here every thing is paternal; there, every thing is rigour and severity; here, every thing is kind, indulgent, tolerant, in favour of the majority; there, every thing emanating from the government is partial, intolerant and exclusive. In Ireland the laws are made to favour one religion and reduce those who do not profess its doctrines, to the condition of a helot. Even I, who have his Majesty's warrant to serve in Canada, am acting in violation of a law, which imposes heavy penalties on a Catholic, who serves in a British regiment in the capacity of a commissioned officer *out of Ireland*; but this unjust and cruel statute, is allowed to slum-

ber ; and history will probably mark it with the same reprobation, as it has already marked its authors. Prejudice and private interest may add new links to our chain ; intolerance may rivet it more closely, but we hope for a better state of things ; and with so many motives to revolt, leave our destiny in the hands of Providence, and do our duty towards the government, as if it did not treat us like slaves and criminals.”

“ And yet, sir,” said D’Argenteuil, his thoughts passing rapidly to possible changes in the happy condition of his own people,—
“ and yet, sir, your country pass for brave and chivalrous, prone to strife, sudden and quick in quarrel, animated with strong passions, and attached to their country and religion.”

“ I believe that to be a just view of their disposition, my lord ; and yet every attempt

they have made to emancipate themselves has been rendered abortive, more, I should hope, from want of prudence than want of valour. Moreover, our leading patriots doubt the utility, even though the attempt might succeed, of breaking off our connection with England: one cannot "*improvise*" a new state of society in the midst of an old one; it is impossible to have a fleet, commerce, political relations, and create the means of maintaining them by a simple declaration of independence: the anarchy that would inevitably result from such a successful project of separation, would only produce a change of evils, more insupportable than those we endure. The Italian proverb, old as the time of Tacitus, applies very strictly to our case "*il tempo, e un gallant uomo*;" we will let him do his work; he will make us at no very distant

day an integral part of the family of Great Britain: and when we shall be treated like the children of a common parent, we care little whether he be an English or an Irishman; such a question would not be worth a cudgelling match between two peasants at an Irish fair."

" You will then fight as zealously the battles of England, as if you were born in Kent, a member of the church militant?"

" Unquestionably : my engagement has been voluntary and leaves me no pretext to violate it : besides, an universally admitted principle of honour, must never be sacrificed to any speculative notion of duty ; else confidence, faith and morality, would be unsettled as the various caprices and opinions of mankind. PRIVATE, AS WELL AS PUBLIC HONOUR, COMPELS A SOLDIER TO DEFEND HIS STANDARD."

“ I admit the soundness of your doctrine, Captain De Courcy, as much as I admire your resignation; but if I were in your situation, I am not sure that I could find inclination to practise a virtue so painful.”

“ If duty and inclination, my lord, were always agreed, there would be no virtue in the world; men become great by the power they possess to make great sacrifices and their promptness to execute them. I have been taught to attach no importance to my inclination, whenever I find it in opposition with a self-evident duty.”

There is no saying how far this conversation might have been carried on, had not a servant entered, to announce that the cariole was ready at the door.

Our travellers set out in high spirits, pleased with each other's conversation; the little

Canadian post-horses flew along the snow-path, their bells jingled, and the sound seemed to animate them ; the conductor sang from one relay to another, with the exception of pauses made every time he came near one of the numerous wooden crosses, that are planted on the side of the highway, when he doffed his woollen cap and remained silent, until he thought himself out of the hearing of such spirits as his faith taught him were placed to guard its sacred symbol. They arrived at Montreal on the third day. D'Argenteuil only stopped to take refreshment and change horses ; and although his general habits disposed him to avoid all intimacies with the English, he made our young soldier promise to take an early opportunity to pay him a visit at the Lake of the Two Mountains.

CHAPTER VII.

The noon tide sun call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war.

SHAKSPEARE.

DE COURCY saw the old Canadian lord depart with emotion; his age, dignity of manner, opinions and disposition, inspired our young soldier with veneration and affection.

As soon as he was fixed in his new quarters, had paid his visit to the commanding officer, and taken charge of his company, his thoughts turned towards home, parents and friends, and to these he consecrated his first

moments of leisure, as we find by the following letter to his father :

“ MY DEAREST FATHER,

“ It is time, after so long an absence, to give you *des signes de vie*; and I need scarce say with how sincere delight my imagination transports me to your presence, where, seated in your study, I can fancy your tender and anxious curiosity, impatient to become acquainted with my adventures since we parted. I approach you with that familiarity, which you taught me to feel by making me, as you often said, your friend and companion, so as to blend in one common sentiment, the filial affection of a son, with the unconstrained freedom of an equal. This completely removed the awe with which children approach the solemn big wig and shaggy eye-brows of

age and authority, that so often discourage confidence and estrange children from their parents.

“ For my part, I can scarcely comprehend the fear of most of my young acquaintance for their fathers and mothers, the care with which they conceal from them their thoughts and actions, and the consequent mystery and dissimulation, which are mixed up with their everyday intercourse. I love you too sincerely, and value you too highly, to do any thing that could lessen my claim to your affection, or my title to your esteem, and shall write to you as I would to my friends and brother officers of the fortieth, Fortescue and Sommerville.

“ I cannot say that I have been happy since I left Ireland: resignation is not happiness, since it supposes the existence of ills we cannot avoid; but you have taught me to con-

sider it in the light of a virtue that I shall be constantly called to exercise. I have at least the satisfaction of obeying a precept in every act of patient submission to the dispensations of Providence.

“ I embarked in the Joseph transport ship, which was to carry me from the hospitable shores of my native land. I shall not fill my letter with the details of sea sickness, and all those inevitable incommodities of a long passage. I had the satisfaction of witnessing a tremendous storm, and as Zanga says in the *Revenge*, it suited ‘ the gloomy tenour of my soul.’ It occurred in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, and surely the ‘ whirlwinds of the north ’ were all let loose on our crazy bark. We were tossed about during two days with an impetuosity that alarmed all the passengers; the women screamed with terror, the men

looked pale, the captain, though a brave man, looked uneasy when he saw his boats struck off the deck by a mountain-like wave that broke upon it, and the main mast and running rigging carried away and lying in a state of ruin and confusion. During these scenes of danger and desolation, I had an opportunity of admiring the fearless countenances and intrepid efforts of the gallant sailors, who, beaten by the tempest and often enveloped in immense waves that broke through the standing rigging upon them, clung to the ropes, resisted with spirit and vigour the storm with all its attendant horrors, and although deprived of repose, food or refreshment during the greater part of the day, did their duty with a cheerfulness and alacrity, worthy the proud title of ‘British tars.’ When ‘the exulting demon of the tempest,’ had ex-

hausted its fury and seemed to repose its mighty wings, as if tired of the struggle, these brave fellows passed round a can of stiff grog, and appeared as unconcerned as Newfoundland dogs who had been amusing themselves in the water.

“ Man can have few opportunities like that I have been describing, of shewing to advantage that instinctive intelligence and courage with which nature has distinguished him above the lower animals. On land, if danger assail him, he has a thousand ways of escaping it; but on the wide abyss of waters, his ordinary resources are wanting; he is confined in a floating prison, upon which the elements exhaust their fury; ‘ a false helm,’ when he flies before the gale, may immerge him in the fathomless bosom of the deep, or a frail plank let inevitable death into his dwelling; and yet

he seems as full of security and confidence as if he were slumbering under the paternal roof in the midst of his family.

“ I love my profession, and hope to find opportunities of proving to my family and my country, that the De Courcy of the present day is not unworthy of the privilege (of wearing his hat in the royal presence) obtained by the valour of his ancestor ; but if my education had qualified me to be a sailor, I should rejoice in the superiority of the navy over the army, and the chances of gathering laurels on an element where the hand of great courage and perseverance alone can pluck them. In the army, success, and consequently fame, may be the fruit of accident ; the wisest generals have been beaten, the best plans have failed from the intervention of some unforeseen event, and what is worse, the judgment of

the world is often unjust towards brave men, whose good fortune has not been equal to their merit; but in the navy, you may quit the scene, if destiny be unfavourable to you: the commander who sinks or blows up his ship rather than strike his flag, is never reproached by his country. A profession that thus renders a man independent of events, and places his reputation in his own keeping, is the one I would prefer could I retrace my steps.—But I am wandering from my object, which was simply to render you an account of my progress.—Thirty days after our departure from Kingsale, we came to anchor under the walls of Quebec, and, fortunately for our safety, in time to avoid a second storm, accompanied by cold severe enough to render our approach impossible.

“ The city is a good military position,

rising almost perpendicularly from the water to a great elevation. Our immortal Wolf, aware of the inefficiency of an attack on the side of the river St. Lawrence, landed his army about two miles from the town; and aided by the sailors of the fleet, ascended a steep ravine with his artillery and ammunition, so as to be able to approach the fortress on the land side. This movement was executed with such secrecy and expedition, that he was in order of battle on the plain of Quebec the following day. You know his enviable fate. If, as Montaigne supposes, ‘a man’s happiness depends on the circumstances of his death,’ how much is Wolf to be envied; he died with the word victory on his lips, while Fame, with her thousand trumpets, proclaimed his renown to his admiring countrymen.

“I was received by the governor with the

dignified reserve which he thought due to an officer who wanted every thing which, in his eyes, entitles a man to his notice,—namely, two gold epaulets. I was even invited to dinner, merely because my father was an earl; for the people about him took care to make me understand, that my rank did not procure so high a mark of distinction. We have, my dear father, often laughed together at the squire of Don Quixotte, in his government of Barataria;—but I see you frown at the commencement of an irreverent comparison:—he is what nature and habit have made him, surrounded with hauteur, dulness, and mediocrity in fine uniforms.

“ I am indebted to this invitation for a very kind and pleasing acquaintance, in the person of an old Canadian nobleman, my “ *compagnon de voyage*” from Quebec to Montreal. My

French name and facility of conversing in his native language, inspired him with a desire to make my acquaintance, and the Seigneur D'Argenteuil has found in me a due sense of gratitude. He resembles, too, my beloved father. The fire of indignation sparkled in his eye when I spoke of Ireland and her unhappy sons; for he also is one of a conquered people, and uncertain of the fate that awaits a colony whose inhabitants have not the good fortune to be members of the established church, which I believe is the principal and unpardonable crime of my countrymen.* Up to the present hour D'Argenteuil has little reason to complain, as every thing refused to Ireland, has been very generously accorded to Canada. He has made me promise to visit him at his castle,

* The author has forgotten that this crime has been pardoned lately on earth, as it has been long since pardoned in heaven.—
ED.

not many miles from Montreal, where my regiment is stationed; and I feel so well disposed to cultivate his friendship, that I shall keep my word as soon as it may be decorous to ask for leave of absence.

“I hope Stuart has finished and sent my portrait to my beloved mother; I wear her’s next my heart. You know all I would say to you both, could I give utterance to the sentiments that animate

“Your affectionate son,

“E. De C.”

Before closing the dispatch he wrote the following letter to his friend Sommerville:

“I know not, my dear Sommerville, how the general disposition of my soul may be changed by this atrocious climate, but with all my de-

sire to commune with you, I am incapable of drawing, as I wish, a picture of my sensations. It is cold enough to freeze the blood in my arteries; and if the temperature of my apartment were left to the mercy of the atmosphere, I should remain until next summer like the dead monks of Mount St. Bernard, frozen until the last trumpet shall call them to receive the final reward of their pious hospitality.

“ At the moment I write to you, this country presents to my view one uniform surface of snow, four feet deep; so that hunting, shooting, or, indeed, any kind of exercise, is impossible. My society is neither elegant nor literary; and if I were not one of those who always hope for better in the worst as in the best circumstances, there are discomforts enough here to damp the buoyancy of my spirits. The only recreation here is at the mess

table; and you who know my taste and habits, can judge of the value of this resource.

“ My brother officers seem content with this pleasure, as if man were made for no better employment than eating and drinking. If there be any sources of knowledge in the minds of these gentlemen, they keep them locked up from me; so that I sit with sad civility and listen with indifference to the insignificant topics discussed at our daily meetings. The interests and pursuits of these officers must, I should suppose, be similar to mine, and yet their society is disagreeable to me. I cannot occupy my mind with the puerilities that give them pleasure. I am speechless among them: their silly affected manners benumb my faculties. I sometimes attribute this to my love of solitude, when there is nothing really “soul stirring” to excite me. Having for your instruc-

tion passed the officers *en masse* in review, I must enter a little into detail. The lieutenant-colonel commanding is married; has no private fortune, and being the happy father of nine children, and the husband of a sick wife, is exclusively occupied with domestic affairs; so that he is only visible at parades and inspection, and then looks shabby and unsoldier-like. The two majors, and some of the captains, are very much in the same state; they came here several years ago, and having no taste for letters or science, felt all the tediousness of single blessedness, and took such yoke fellows as the country produced. We are now at war; and if the opinion of Prince Eugene be true, — “that married men are bad stuff to be led to combat,” there will be little glory in store for our army; since, instead of feeling that intoxicating excitement of a battle, these poor fel-

lows will think of widows and orphans, that an unlucky ball may deprive of bread and cast upon the parish. As to the young unmarried officers, I have not yet found one among them of whom I could make a companion.

“ I fear that my heart has been cast in a mould that was broken by nature, when her task was performed. I seek fellowship with something like myself, and despair of finding it; and as it is possible that the being I am in search of is a creation of my own fancy, I shall probably go on alone to the end of my life. The want of agreeable company has laid me open to the invasion of a very ordinary second-rate person, whom you recollect to have seen in the shape of an *old young* lieutenant of the twenty-seventh—Mr. George Augustus Thornwood. He has been all attention and kindness to me since my arrival, and (as I might have

expected, had I a little more experience,) got me, as we say in Ireland, into a scrape. As this affair has made some noise, and may be reckoned among the nine-day wonders of a garrison town, I shall fill the remainder of my sheet with an account of it.

“ If you paid any attention to this genius, you will probably recollect his affected and ridiculous disposition. He was what my Lord Chesterfield recommended to his son to be, ‘ every thing to every body;’ he was ‘ gay with the gay, grave with the grave,’ and wished by conforming himself to every person’s humour, to make every one his friend. Knowing how much importance the common herd attaches to what Thornwood calls great acquaintance, he pretended to be very intimate with every high sounding name in England, and silyly gives you to understand that he has royal

blood in his veins. He is here lodged in the sinecure of town major, and sets the fashion, a sort of *arbiter elegantiarum* of balls and dinners, having a turn for ordering suitable decorations and petty embellishments, whenever any of those who have more money than taste wish to shine. He is called King of Montreal, as Nash was called King of Bath; and nothing can be more amusing than the airs of protection which he gives himself among the fat citizens of the town. His fancied importance renders him the happiest of mortals; and as he is very harmless and amusing, people laugh at him and indulge him in his self-delusion. He is constantly on the look out for news and new arrivals, and repeats every thing he learns with an air of mystery: he often talks of books he never read, and if he can catch a hard word, employs it on every occasion, never troubling

himself with the *àpropos* of any thing. Whenever a stranger arrives from England or the neighbouring colonies, he contrives to learn his name and every particular respecting him; and if he be a titled person, or the fiftieth cousin of any great man, Thornwood waits upon him, shews him about like a wild beast, and sometimes makes him out a relation of his own, or at least an old friend,—so anxious is he to conceal in a crowd of contradictory circumstances his birth and early associations.

“ He lately caught one of those travelling gentry who affect to be learned, and come to Canada to cull simples and paint the curious plants that may be found in the country, or write the history of the Indian tribes: he invited this genius to dine at the mess. He was himself ill of an indigestion, of which his vanity had been the cause, inasmuch as he had

undertaken to give a practical demonstration, that the musk rat of Canada, cooked *en civet*, was both exquisite and wholesome.

“ He wrote a letter of excuse to his new friend for not being able to attend at dinner, and charged me to do the honours of the table to his guest. The party was animated, and the stranger extremely facetious; but to my astonishment, he amused the company at the expence of his host, whom (as he found the officers disposed to be merry), he turned into ridicule, caricaturing his weakness and singularities without measure or moderation.

“ I took occasion to observe, that although ‘every man had his faults,’ I could not help thinking the table to which the stranger had been invited an unsuitable place to turn his entertainment into ridicule, and that too in presence of the person who had been delegated to

represent him, in shewing those hospitable attentions which his own indisposition deprived him of the pleasure of performing in person. I protested against my own participation in mirth so ill timed, which could not be indulged in if Thornwood were present.

“ Every one felt that the joke had been carried too far, and the author seemed for a moment astounded at my observation; but instead of admitting his error he lost his temper, and said,

“ Sir, I am not accustomed to receive a lesson from so young a master.

“ Then, sir, I replied, it will leave the better impression on your memory; and I trust it will not often fall to my lot to instruct pupils of your age. He rose suddenly from the table, hurried out of the room, and left me convinced that his indocility would compel me to abet

with my sword, the expressions I had uttered.

“ We sat late at table ; and as I was but little acquainted with the officers, I remained on purpose to hear their comments upon so strange an occurrence. I expected to find the stranger blamed, and Thornwood pitied for his indiscriminate and unreflecting attention to persons unknown to him ; but I found that the friend of every one has seldom any very devoted friend in the hour of need ; that little value is affixed to services that are not exclusive, and that persons who have what the French call a ‘ *cœur banal*,’ very rarely inspire any better feeling than contempt. Nevertheless, I was shocked at the indifference and cold-heartedness of men, who ought to have felt a species of humiliation cast on the corps, in the person of one of its members, insulted and turned into ridicule in their presence ; but I

left their society, convinced that they were more pleased with the wit, than offended at the impropriety of the stranger's conduct.

“ I naturally expected a message or a visit from this learned traveller, and remained until a late hour at my lodgings, without hearing from him. I afterwards learned that he had gone about to look for a second, and failing in finding one, determined to seek a *rencontre* without a witness. I had scarcely reached the end of the street leading from my lodgings to the parade, when he accosted me with a constrained and supercilious bow. He was wrapped in a large cloak, and proposed to me to accompany him without the walls of the city. I wore my regimental sword, and it did not occur to me, that his weapon might give him an advantage. We soon arrived at a spot where there was little danger of being ob-

served ; he cast off his mantle and shewed a good blade, broad towards the hilt, asked me if I were disposed to make an apology in the presence of the mess for the offensive expressions I had uttered, and as my answer was not satisfactory, took his ground and ran furiously at me, brandishing his weapon in a theatrical style. I perceived that I had to do with an adversary who was ignorant of fencing, and shewed more temerity than skill ; but I did not suspect that he sought rather to intimidate me than to come to close quarters. I stood tranquilly watching his movements, and desiring rather to humiliate him than spill his blood, sprang suddenly upon him, broke his guard and disarmed him. He flew off like lightning, and when he felt far enough to be out of danger, demanded whether I intended to avail myself of an accident that

placed him at my mercy. By this time my blood was up, and indignant at his impudence, I offered him his sword if he would consent to renew the combat and fight it out; at the same time I declared, that if he flinched or prevaricated, I would order my servant Bill Holdbrook to cudgel him. He walked cautiously towards the spot where his weapon lay, and having seized it, walked deliberately a few steps, as if he were about to recommence, then fled as fast as his heels could carry him.

“ I returned to my apartment, determined to put my threat into execution. I armed my servant with a smart rattan, and I need scarce add, that this honest partisan’s face glowed with delight, as I gave him the order to seek Mr. K——, and lay it over his shoulders in his master’s name. But he was not to be found; nor have I since learned what has

become of him. A thousand conjectures were afloat as to the cause of his sudden disappearance: you will readily conceive that I felt no inclination to satisfy idle curiosity, or enter into particulars; for few things can be more disagreeable, than to relate the part one may have sustained in a quarrel, more especially when your antagonist is of the family of 'honest Jack.'

“ Adieu, dear Sommerville,

“ Ever yours,

“ E. De C.”

CHAPTER VIII.

It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
 On such as smile upon us ; the heart must
 Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
 Hath weaned it from all worldlings.

BYRON.

TIME passed heavily with our young soldier : he soon exhausted the stock of books he had brought from home, and the scanty resources of Montreal, offered little worth reading. The only portion of society that had any pretensions to learning was that of the law ; but the “*Repertoire de Jurisprudence*,” the “*Coutume de Paris*,” and the dull “*Commentaries of De*

Ferrière," had no attractions for a mind like that of Eustace. Sometimes one might find the poems of Allan Ramsay, or the "fustian of Macpherson" on the table of a lady from the highlands; but at the period to which we allude, literature had not found its way among the English settlers in Lower Canada. In such a state of society, the business of life lay within very narrow limits: and the mind of De Courcy, eager, ardent and studious of change, acting and reacting upon his body, deprived him of rest, and by degrees changed the rose on his cheek to the feverish hue, which is the offspring of struggles between a sound body and a dissatisfied spirit. He cast his eyes around him in search of social intercourse or suitable occupation, but neither could be found. His brother officers were a set of dull dandies, or stupid domestic drudges,

stamped with mediocrity; the traders had their tin and blankets to barter for peltry; the lawyers and magistrates had neither time nor fortune to bestow on the elegant amusements of life; and the old nobility had retired to their estates in the country.

Formed by nature for active and perilous enterprize, with ambition heated by family renown, and his fortune to make, De Courcy formed a thousand projects to escape from the monotonous existence of a garrison lounge, very much like the dull unvaried rotation of a gold fish in a glass basin; but the die was cast, and he was compelled to resign himself to the condition in which chance had placed him. Sometimes he had thoughts of quitting the army and joining those bold and hardy adventurers who penetrated the interminable forests of North America, and by audacity and intelli-

gence, carried the British name among savage hordes, and made them the instruments as well of commercial cupidity as political ambition. But he was the son of an Earl, the offspring of an ancient house; he could not humiliate his father: he considered commerce as a respectable occupation, but not such as might lead to distinction; nor had he any counting-house qualities; he could deny himself any costly gratification when his funds were low, but he had no idea of the trade of making money, in which he saw the most narrow-minded and illiberal crowned with success, sycophants and flatterers to those who are prosperous, hard-hearted and pitiless to those who are unfortunate. He could not, as Burke eloquently expresses it, “make his money his god, his ledger his bible, and his desk his altar of worship.” The learned professions required him

to begin life again ; and although there are illustrious examples of men who have changed Xenophon, Polybius, Montecuculi and Saxe, for Coke upon Lyttleton, with advantage to society and honour to themselves, Eustace did not find in his nature, a disposition to plodding patient industry. Like the high-mettled racer, impatient to start on the course, the curb to which his destiny had subjected his haughty and ardent spirit, wearied and irritated him by turns. He could not devise any means of spending the superabundance of life and force that spurred him on ; and chained as it were to one spot, he passed his time in vain projects and fruitless wishes. Too proud to solicit, too modest to claim the advantages due to his merit or his name, he sunk into a state of inaction and despondency.

Weeks and months passed away and carried

with them, like leaves wafted from a fair tree by the chill winds of autumn, that stock of gaiety which Eustace had once deemed exhaustless. He often thought of his amiable travelling companion and the kind invitation he had given him; but he had lost his relish for ordinary enjoyments.

Men of this description are more to be pitied than envied: they are the heroes of nature, endowed with faculties that render them capable of conceiving and executing enterprises foreign to the regular, sober movement of society; and when accident fails to place them in circumstances surrounded with danger and difficulty, their lives are passed like that of an eagle cast into a common poultry-yard with clipped wings and broken talons. Of such stuff are Cæsar, Tamerlaine and Napoleon, Robin Hood, Cartouche and Paul

Jones. Their great passions are at once the sources of their virtues and vices; and the difference between a conqueror and a chief of a banditti depends essentially on the direction given to their energies, and the circumstances in which they are placed.

“ One murder makes a VILLAIN,
Millions a HERO !” *

The return of spring, the melting of the vast sheet of snow that covers for many months the face of the country, the breaking up of the ice that holds the lakes and rivers in bondage, the warm winds that suddenly call vegetation into action, and impart new life and movement to every thing, is an interesting moment in this northern clime. New projects are formed; the population abandons repose and pleasure for the useful and necessary

* See prize poem on death, by Bishop Porteus.

affairs of life, and nature, awaking from a long lethargic slumber, marches with celerity towards the festival of summer. In Canada "winter" never "lingers in the lap of May." The governor, determined not to leave to the vernal sun, the task of gladdening the heart of man, announced his intention of visiting Montreal.

Preparations were made to lodge this great personage; and the garrison troops, awaking from their lethargy, were seen brushing their coats, scrubbing and polishing their arms, and performing the customary exercises and evolutions, in order to pass a review of inspection. His arrival was a source of joy and hope, especially to those who had favours to ask, or who wished to appear at his tiny court, which persons of doubtful rank supposed would be a sort of diploma of gentleman, and qualify them

to enter into what was called good company. Invitations were sent to the neighbouring gentry ; and although D'Argenteuil deemed such duties and homage to be a disagreeable "*corvée*," he did not judge it prudent to be remarked among the absentees. His first inquiries were for Captain De Courcy, with whom he renewed his acquaintance. He chided him for his "*sauvagerie* ;" such being the gentle expression, which attributed to his humour rather than his heart, the apparent indifference he had shewn to the proffered friendship of the good baron. Eustace received him with affection, and candidly owned that his conduct was not approved by his heart. He had, he said, passed a sad and solitary winter ; and although every day found him disposed to avail himself of the opportunity the kindness of the baron had furnished

to break through the apathy that had by degrees extended its influence over him, he could not feel that he would be a fit companion for an agreeable and happy family. The good old baron saw that his young friend was fallen into a state of melancholy, and that his imagination exaggerated the ills inseparable from his situation in a strange land.

“ Ask for leave of absence, my young friend,” said he, “ accompany me to the Lake of the Two Mountains, you will there find the warm cordiality of home, and this, with pure air and field sports, will soon dispel the gloom that hangs over you.”

Eustace could not resist such kindness ; and as soon as Sir Crowdie Mac Grosdutt had passed the garrison and militia in review, and received the homage of the magistrates, our young soldier obtained permission to quit his

military duties and accompany his friend to that mansion, where, unsuspected by him and its inhabitants, lay in embryo, those latent causes which soon ripened forth into events intimately interwoven with his destiny.

Arrived at the village of St. Ann, De Courcy had an opportunity of witnessing the affection and devotedness of the inhabitants for their landlord and friend: the bells rung a merry peal, and the men, women and children, crowded around the old nobleman with smiling faces and kind greetings, and welcomed him with that respectful familiarity which dignity and benevolence inspire.

“ Good day, my children,” (*mes enfans*,) said the good man. With affectionate condescension he inquired after the health of the wives, children, and fathers of the village, and listened attentively to the tedious and circum-

stantial detail of every bavard, who thought he ought not to omit the most trifling event that had befallen himself or his family. There was no assumed superiority, no contumely in his manner; he was not occupied with his self-importance and the preservation of his dignity, while he lent an ear to the tale of his humble neighbours. He would have been distressed at the thought of inspiring awe or fear in hearts that were devoted to him. He lived and spent his fortune among them; and the revenue derived from their labour, returned, like a refreshing shower, to its natural source, to vivify and stimulate the authors of his opulence and prosperity. They all were sensible that they had a common interest to maintain. The power of the chief served as a rampart to the subordinate, and protected them in peace, without making them acquainted with the ri-

gours of servitude, while gratitude and devotedness, rendered that power permanent and salutary. This was the way in which D'Argenteuil interpreted what is commonly called "the natural dependence between landlord and tenant. Honored for his virtues, and looked up to as a superior being for his knowledge and rank, and the useful purposes to which both were applied, he was as happy as friends, fortune, and a good conscience could make him.*

Bellegarde in his war-dress, at the head of the youth of his tribe, stood at the castle gate to receive his master. They expressed their joy in a sort of wild dance, common to the savages when any happy event befalls them.

De Courcy was delighted at this novel scene,

* We are curious to know whether the author intended to mask a sarcasm on Irish and English landlords?—ED.

equally touching and singular in the eyes of an European spectator.

“ These rude children of the forest,” said the baron, “ render me a spontaneous and willing homage ; they would rejoice in an opportunity to risk their lives for my service or that of my family. There is nothing sophisticated in their sentiments ; they pay kindness with love to the knife, and as rarely forget a good office as forgive an injury. They are faithful in executing their engagements, and never dream of pleading inconvenience, as an excuse for a breach of promise ; and of these savage virtues, or rather the inflexibility with which they practise them, they are, unhappily, too often the dupes, in their intercourse with their white brethren.”

CHAPTER IX.

Cuando los ojos ven lo que nunca vieron, el
Corazon siente lo que nunca sintio.

DE GRACIAN.

When the eyes behold what they had never seen,
The heart feels what it had never felt.

AXON.

THE travellers proceeded to the great vestibule of the castle, where they were received by Madame de Belrose, the baron's only sister, and father Le Clerc, the confidential friend and domestic chaplain of the family of D'Argenteuil. When they reached the drawing-room, the baron turned towards his sister, and inquired for his daughter Matilda.

“She is in the garden, planting flowers in the grass-plots, brother,” said the lady.

“On the borders, you would say, my dear sister.”

“No, among the grass; she thinks they look more like wild flowers dispersed in the grass than in regular beds; so you will find roses, and pinks, and sweet william, with a green ground to set off their beauty to advantage. And then she weeds, and plants, and spoils her complexion. She is like a humming bird, eternally flying from leaf to leaf, never a moment of repose.”

“If it amuse and give her health, it is well, good sister.”

“As to her health, brother, you will find her pretty much as you left her; she takes exercise that would exhaust a highland fur trader; she passed the whole of yesterday

shooting on the lake, and brought home a great quantity of ducks, and other wild fowl. This morning, she spent an hour teaching her pony to swim; he followed her like a dog on terra firma; but she would put his attachment to a severe trial, by running into the lake, and calling him to follow her. The poor animal ran up and down the shore, and shewed much uneasiness when he saw his mistress fairly afloat in the water; but he would venture no farther, until Matilda put a long rein to his bridle, and made him swim after her; and now he would follow her across the lake like a water-spaniel. She was so pleased with his docility, that she recompensed him with a meal of all the sweet cake she could find in the house."

The baron was too much accustomed to the loquacity of Madame de Belrose to pay much

attention to these domestic details; but, turning to De Courcy, said:

“Your English ladies, sir, would be shocked at such pranks, played by a girl of seventeen. But I brought her up with other ideas: I did not hesitate to repudiate the antiquated notions of female education, transmitted to us by our grandmothers; who held, that a sound mind in a sound body might be very useful to a boy, but that a girl ought to be brought up to be ignorant of every thing, except what might just be necessary to make her afraid of every thing: so that she ought to faint at the report of a gun, scream if a mouse ran across the room, and tremble and look pale if her carriage jolted on a rough road. After being mewed up in a convent, where they were taught to consider every thing unclean and sinful that passed without the walls, women

entered upon the stage of life mere machines, without knowledge, will, or judgment to guide them. This durance vile, usually continued until the family of a young lady found a suitable marriage for her; and the same hour that emancipated her from the shackles of a cloister, witnessed her transfer to a man she had never seen or known, alike ignorant of her duties as a wife, a mother, and a member of society. This mode of treating a creature that so much resembles man, and of whose aid we stand so much in need, always seemed to me both absurd and cruel; so I determined to bring up Matilda in my own way. My good sister here, who served her as a mother since she was only three years old, was prejudiced in favour of the plan of education adopted by our parents; but I persisted in my opinion, and have reason to be satisfied with my conduct."

“I will venture to say, my lord, the young lady has been much happier for the liberty she has enjoyed.”

“Yes, sir, and much better instructed; besides, she has never been sick since she was seven years old; and this is one great advantage that seldom results from the inactive, debilitating regimen prescribed for females; or, if you please, a fortunate exemption from the evils that beset the early stages of existence. In youth, it is physical power that stands most in need of development; and ideas shoot forth with vigour, and take deeper root in a strong soil, than in that which is kept in order by artificial means. To learn rapidly and comprehend clearly, the mind ought to be free from care and pre-occupation about bodily ailments.

“We live, too, in an age, when women re-

quire pretty much the same instruction that is deemed necessary for men; they have to watch over our health in infancy, study our faculties and propensities, and 'rear the tender thought' in its first budding into form. This can never be well done by a sickly doll, who knows only how to dress for a ball, give herself airs of fashion, and study the art to please every one better than her husband. Then our principles, whatever they be, we owe them to our mother. If she leave us to low people, we yield to the natural attraction of similitude, and possess nothing noble but the name; we become grooms and jockies, instead of gentlemen; and carry through life, if not the manners, at least the vulgar and base opinions of our early associates. The moral philosophy of the stable, or the servants'-hall, is all we gain by the ignorance

or neglect of our mother. If we have the misfortune to lose our father, the care of our fortune, our establishment in life, our success and destiny, depend on the knowledge and good management of the surviving parent; and if her early years have been passed like those of the far greater part of young women of quality, with the kindest solicitude for our welfare, she is incapable of discharging the most sacred and most important of duties. In general, a weak, nervous, and superficial wife, is an incumbrance rather than a help to her husband."

This was, as my uncle Toby would say, the "hobby-horse" of the baron; and he would have ridden it much farther, if the object of his solicitude had not suddenly entered the drawing-room.

Without paying the least attention to De

Courcy, Matilda hung round her father's neck, kissed both his cheeks, then holding his grey head between her little hands, looked earnestly in his face, to satisfy herself that he was not in worse health since they had parted.

“In the ardour of your attentions to your father, my love,” said D’Argenteuil, “you forget his friend, Captain De Courcy, who does us the honour to spend a few weeks in our solitude, which we must all endeavour to render as little monotonous as possible.”

“The friend of my father,” quickly replied Matilda, “is sure of a kind welcome;” then fixing her penetrating eyes on the stranger, continued,

“My father calls this solitude, sir, only to excite your surprise at the variety of our amusements. Are you fond of hunting, shooting, fishing, and the rude exercises of the Indians?”

“ Whatever be the amusements of the inhabitants of the castle, I shall be happy to be admitted to share in them; and from what the baron has just now learned from Madame De Belrose, of your love of the chase, I promise myself much of an enjoyment of which I have been lately deprived, and which constitutes the principal occupation of our gentry in Ireland.”

“ What a happy people you must be! healthful exercise, good appetite, sound sleep, cheerfulness and innocence.”

“ The picture is flattering,” said Eustace; “ yet it was thus with me for many years. The first thing we learn to do well is to hunt and shoot; and an Irish gentleman would be more ashamed of being ignorant of the terms of sporting, than of the common rules of grammar. I assure you, Miss D’Argenteuil, that

I have passed a great part of my life on horse-back."

Eustace thought he was entering into the spirit of the favourite pursuits of the sprightly girl; but she stopped him short, by observing, that he spoke her language too elegantly to have devoted all his days to pastime in the fields. "I will not believe," said she archly, "that your countrymen set so little value on the useful and ornamental branches of education, as to neglect them for a pleasure that is not worth the sacrifice of any serious or important duty."

"It ought to be a mere holiday sport to be indulged in," said Eustace, (retracting a little of his enthusiasm,) when we have nothing better to do; and I cannot say I prefer it to a good library and literary exercises."

"Well, sir, in this also you may be in-

dulged; we have a large stock of books; you may even study the art of attack and defence, if you like it, for my father kept me for many hours together with Vauban and Coehorn, when he was forming the plan of the enclosure of the castle; and although he did not intend to make me a member of the corps of engineers, he made me comprehend the use of bastions and curtains and demi-lunes:—but (looking at her feet, covered with dust), I must retire, and cast off my Mameluke pantaloons and vest, which I wear in the morning to please my father, and put on my French costume, which I wear at dinner to please my aunt.” She then stepped out of the room as lightly as a kitten, leaving De Courcy full of admiration and curiosity.

When he retired to his apartment, he delivered himself to a thousand conjectures on the

singular being whom he had just seen, so unlike the young ladies to whose society he had been accustomed. She addresses me, said he, with the unaffected ease of an old acquaintance, without constraint or embarrassment; and yet there is in her manner a mixture of grace, vivacity, and dignity, which gives an inexpressible charm to every word she utters. She wears the mask of a gay and careless spirit, whilst her physiognomy indicates deep reflection and melancholy. She has evidently escaped the drill and exercise to which old matrons subject their pupils. She has no affectation, no coquetry; even her pantaloons, short boots, tunic and velvet cap are not new or fresh.

The dinner bell put an end to the meditations of De Courcy, and summoned him to his toilette. He ordered his servant to unpack

his best suit, determined, probably, to appear before this new acquaintance with all the advantages that a fine uniform imparts to beauty; but a reflection shot across his mind, that as the person he most wished to please might set no value on such trifles, he hesitated; but after weighing the pros and cons of the matter, and ashamed of the importance he gave it, finished by executing his first intention.

He found Madame De Belrose in the costume of the French Court, with the exception of the *panier*; the chaplain, father Le Clerc, in his soutanne; the old baron in a velvet coat and embroidered waistcoat; and Matilda in a plain silk dress of the form of that which we see in the picture of Raphael, called *La belle Jardinière*. Her fine dark hazel hair was gathered in form of a large rose behind a lovely picturesque head, and the only ornament she

wore was a small embroidered band of velvet round her head, fastened on the forehead with an agraffe, presenting two very small likenesses, in miniature, of her father and mother. Her person was neither tall nor short, but of "the first order of fine forms," light, graceful and energetic. Her forehead was spacious, her features exquisitely traced and full of expression, rather of the Grecian form; her eyes dark and glowing, her skin of that ivory tone which painters give to figures of imaginary beings in landscapes of the Italian school. There was something in her *ensemble* of oriental beauty, which is rare in northern climates; and it might have been this peculiarity that engaged her father to recommend to her for a morning dress the costume in which Eustace first saw her.

There reigned in this ancient family an usage

that the “march of intellect” has repudiated; whether owing to the presumptuous manners of dependants, or the pride of patrons, we leave to the decision of our readers;—it was, to place at the dinner table such members of the household as were above the rank of domestics. The drawing-room society was select; but at meals there was a series of subordinate places, from the baron and his sister, to Bellegarde, the adopted Indian boy of whom we have spoken. The chaplain, the steward, the music and drawing masters, were always admitted. Below the chaplain, the conversation was confined to matters connected with the duties of the respective guests; and this arrangement had the advantage of making known the wishes of the master, without the formality of positive orders.

Madame De Belrose had been a distin-

guished belle in the circles of Versailles and Chantilly; and recollecting to have often heard that "the Graces never grow old," retained at fifty a little of that amiable coquetry which, at "*a certain age*," imparts to man and woman (in France at least,) the desire to please.

Time had convinced her that the period of conquest was passed; and she had renounced in good earnest every pretension to inspire that passion that delights the young, flatters the middle aged, and sometimes astonishes well-looking ladies and gentlemen who touch the half century: but although her roses had fled, and her flowing hair had been touched with a young autumnal frost, she was sensible that goodness and benevolence, embellished every period of human existence, and more especially that which has lost every other power to excite interest and affection. She

was constant in her attentions to the young officer, and questioned him on every thing she thought might please him; his tastes, his country, his family, and his friends, appeared to be objects of her solicitude.

De Courcy replied with candour and politeness, and was even prolix, seeing that Matilda lent an attentive ear. He found that the good lady liked to talk about France, and frequently spoke of his residence in that country, in order that she might recur to passed scenes, in which she had acted a part. She dwelt minutely on the glorious festivals of Saint Hubert, and of Chantilly; where a member of the illustrious House of Condé had spent, in the erection of stables, seven hundred thousand pounds of our money!—She spoke with rapture of the groves and forests of that princely residence, through which roads and avenues

are made in every direction, to permit ladies and gentlemen to ride in carriages and on horseback, enjoy the pursuit of the stag and wild boar, as well as favour interviews between lovers, who sought such occasions with an avidity only to be compared to that which the present race feels to avail itself of the immunities of a masked ball.

Eustace, in his turn, expatiated on the pleasures of an Irish fox hunt; where stout hearts and good horses seek neither smooth avenues nor open fields. He thought that since we made sport of pursuing animals to death, we ought to give them fair play, and maintained that pleasure and excitement were great in proportion to the danger and emulation in surmounting such obstacles as walls, double ditches, and five-barred gates. He

insinuated, that game was assassinated, instead of being killed in fair strife, in France.

“ I perceive, sir,” said Madame De Belrose, “ that in your country ladies do not partake of all your amusements; I have even heard, but scarce believe, that they receive hints to retire from table, as soon as they have dined, in order that gentlemen may converse more freely, and drink more wine.”

This observation was rather an unkind cut: Eustace had found fault with the Chantilly hunt; and the lady was not sorry to remind him that there were usages in Ireland less susceptible of defence than that of hunting in smooth avenues, where men, women, and children, might enjoy the pleasures of the chase, without running the risk of breaking their necks.

CHAPTER X.

We would speak with thee farther anon.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE company retired to the drawing-room, where the conversation was renewed.

“ I should like to hear the opinion of Mademoiselle,” said Eustace, “ on the customs of the countries which have been the subject of discussion at dinner.”

“ As a matter of taste,” said Matilda, “ I prefer your chase through a country where obstacles are to be surmounted, and danger incurred, to lying in wait at the corner of

roads that intersect one another, to shoot the stag or the boar; but I must confess that I cannot approve of separating ladies and gentlemen during that portion of the day that, in civilized countries, is allotted to conversation. I do not know why women should be deemed unfit to be members of an intellectual re-union in their own houses. I have read that in barbarous states of society, where weakness is deprived of authority, and even of its moral rights, women are treated like slaves, unworthy to be the friend or companion of men; but in a country that boasts of its justice, refinement, and benevolence, it is a curious anomaly to adore woman as if she were an angel, and the next moment to exclude her from the pleasures of rational conversation."

"There can be no good reason," said Eu-

stace, “ for such an inconsequence, except it be one to banish taste and sentiment from familiar discussion; and yet the education usually given to women, makes them feel little interest in such debates as take place over the bottle.”

This last observation was enough to set the baron on his favourite hobby-horse.

“ I know,” said he, “ only one description of men who dislike modest witnesses to their favourite discourses: it is composed of the depraved and debauched, old and young, who hide their profligacy in the dense populations of large cities:—these know no other science than that of lying, baseness, and perfidy. They are afraid to cheat and deceive men as they do women; and their conversation is necessarily unfit for the ears of those who are their dupes, or their victims. Let

us give to woman an education suitable to her rank, and the duties she is called upon to perform, instead of one that renders her ignorant and effeminate, and all parties will gain by it.

“ ‘To suckle fools and chronicle small beer,’ may be very well for the mass of dull wives as of dull husbands; but surely the sphere of action that our tyranny has allotted to such of them as are, to say the least, our equals in intelligence, as they are our superiors in feeling and sentiment, is by far too limited. It is wonderful, under so many disadvantages, that so great a number of women should have risen to distinction in arts, and science, and literature.”

Matilda's face shewed that she was not indifferent to the remarks made by her father; and De Courcy, who watched its eloquent

expression, hastened to approve of all the opinions of the baron, upon a subject so interesting.

“ I trust, my lord,” said he, “ that few men of good sense, and good feeling, would dissent from such self-evident truths. The ameliorations that learning and religion have made in our institutions, have passed by the rights of woman: the customs of feudality remain, as regards her, unmitigated, as if in these days she might be called upon to follow her lord to the wars, and, failing to do so, lose all her political, and many civil, privileges, which the commonest hind is permitted to exercise.”

“ All this is very fine, and very flattering, for our sex,” said Madame De Belrose; “ at Chantilly, when I was some years younger,—”

“ Let us take our coffee,” said the baron; but he could not escape an old “ thrice-told tale.”

“ My brother, you perceive, Captain De Courcy, has his own notions about female education, and will not believe, that all the privileges he would grant to us may be supplied by a little address and management on our part. ‘Honour in war, fidelity in love,’ as our dear Prince of Condé used to say, setting out for the chase, accompanied by all the fair and the valiant of his Court. There, sir, the cavalier wore a favour, the chosen colour of his mistress; accident brought them together during the tumult of the hunt, and there they formed projects of happiness for themselves, their families, and their friends. I never can be convinced of the utility of changing our old mode of doing things. Do you suppose, sir, that La Valliere and Montespan, and all the celebrated beauties who graced and adorned the Court of Louis le

Grand, could ever have pleased and governed that haughty monarch, had they been educated with the rude simplicity in which my brother so much delights: to ride, to swim, and work at flower beds like a common peasant?"

"Perhaps not, madam; but pardon me if I presume to question the utility of preparing young ladies of quality to be the favourites of any monarch: kings do not wed their subjects; and the young women of my country would not deem it an enviable distinction to share their affections on any condition short of matrimony."

"Very true, very true, sir, no doubt; but as the lovely Duchess de Clermont used to say to me,—you know, sir, she married secretly, what we call in France a *mesalliance*,—‘My dear Belrose,’ said the duchess, ‘the king is

the visible representative of divinity upon earth;’ so, sir, when his favour fell upon any lady, she was thought to be the happiest of mortals; the women envied her; the princes and cardinals, and great dignitaries of the state, were at her feet; she dispensed the bounties of the crown; gave rank in the army; livings in the church; had the public treasury at her command, and did good offices to all her friends. These, sir,” continued the good dame, with an air of triumph, “were the usages of my country; and nothing was deemed so vulgar as to make an ill-natured remark on such matters.—”

“Or so dangerous, madam; for, if I be not mistaken, angry husbands, fathers, and brothers, found a lodging in the Bastile if they but murmured at the distinction to which ladies were elevated.”

“ O yes, there have been some ridiculous instances of incarceration and exile; but the king always finished by forgiving and rewarding.”

It was sufficiently evident that the opinions which Madame De Belrose had cherished during fifty years, would not be modified by the stern morality of Eustace: her notions were sanctioned by the society in which she had passed her youth; and she took it for granted, that it was no more a dishonour to be the mistress of a king, than the second or third wife of a sultan. She was a fair specimen of the highest class of what French ladies were before the death of Louis the Fifteenth, but of which scarcely could now be found a trace, even in that asylum of divine rights, the Faubourg St. Germain.

Madame De Belrose had been shut up in a

convent until she was fifteen, when she was married to a colonel of cavalry, first aide-de-camp to the Prince of Condé, in whose society she was taught, that the first duty of woman is to please, the second, to inspire a violent passion, and the third,—to get out of the scrape with as much address and as little noise as possible.

It was a maxim in that class, to consider the moral evil of conjugal infidelity as nothing, and the discovery of it as a fault, if not a crime. The Spartan boy, who stole the fox, was a hero in the opinion of those ladies; not because he stole it, but because he permitted the animal to eat his flesh, rather than expose the theft by opening his cloak to let him escape. This offence against religion and morality, has been treated by the philosophers of the French school with unpardonable levity;

and the authority of Voltaire, who said "*it was nothing if it was not discovered, and next to nothing if it were,*" has been often cited in defence of this most mischievous of all the vices that destroy social happiness; but, as the old baron stoutly maintained, it was the natural and necessary consequence of a bad system of education, and the disposal of young girls in marriage to those who offered the best provision for their future maintenance.

Led from the side of the abbess, where her sole knowledge was a little music, drawing and embroidery, an innocent victim, was led to the altar to vow eternal love, honour and obedience, to a being she saw for the first time, old enough to be her father, and who, by virtue of an engagement in which the heart had no share, was authorized to raise with a rude hand that veil, which ought only to be touched

by timid, respectful, and devoted affection. Innocent, passive, and obedient, she could scarce comprehend that all the delicacy of her nature, and all the sources of virtue, love, and enthusiasm that lay dormant in her heart, were outraged and violated. But she was not long in making the discovery:—she had been ignorant of love and its terrible emotions; she knew nothing of its rights and privileges; and her first lessons in a corrupt society, only led her to consider marriage as a mere family arrangement, having no other object than to make suitable alliances and augment the fortune of the contracting parties, but to which she could not be morally bound, not having exercised any free agency in making the compact.

She continued, however, to conform herself to the duties imposed upon her, until she

found her husband tired of his interior, and seeking amusement elsewhere; and when she complained, heard for the first time, what her lord and master called REASON, “which is nothing more,” says the eloquent author of *Corinna*, “than the destruction of all the illusions of life.” Loved with apparent passion for two or three months, and taught to believe that her society alone rendered her husband the happiest of mortals, she found out, that coldness and ennui was all she could inspire; and while she was required to repel as an insult, every species of homage or tenderness shewn by those who surrounded her in society, she was given to understand, that her husband might exercise without restraint, privileges which were denied to the softer sex, in contempt of the engagements so solemnly contracted at the altar!

What a cruel and barbarous treaty!—what a source of perfidy, dissimulation and despair! Such was, nevertheless, the condition to which women were reduced at the period to which we refer, by what is called a *mariage de convenance*.

Then came the seduction of example, and the fascinations that console or lead astray, to assail young women thus abandoned by their natural protector; and to these they yielded, or else took refuge in extravagant piety:—for the latter they were turned into ridicule, while they heard of nothing but the felicity of love, gallantry, and tenderness enjoyed by the less scrupulous and equally respected members of their society. The opinion of Madame De Belrose was not, therefore, so culpable as Eustace might suppose, when she said “it was all natural; just as it ought to be.”

It is the sad fate of those who pass a social evening in a French family, to be condemned to listen to a family concert; and as it is natural for the performers to be pleased while they seek to please their friends, this tiresome, because imperfect, source of amusement, generally taxes the patience of the guests some two or three long hours. Eustace was fond of music, but as mediocrity gave him no pleasure, he saw with pain that Matilda and her master were occupied in selecting some of those airs she was in the habit of singing to her father after dinner. Eustace was a good performer on the flute, but he expected so little from the wood nymph, who passed a great part of her time with her dogs and in her garden, that he declined the invitation to take a part in the entertainment. He was much surprised to find that her execution was

more that of an artist than an amateur. Her voice was fine, full and silky, and its tones expressed the sense and meaning of the words. She sang Italian, because, said she, French music requires such efforts as must in a short time deprive the voice of its softness and elasticity;—it is not singing, it is screaming.

The evening passed away with the entire approbation of our young traveller, who was equally surprised and delighted with the refinement and elegance he found in this sequestered spot, where he had expected only the simplicity of mere pastoral life.

When he retired to his chamber his mind was full of Matilda. This lovely girl, said he, seems not conscious of her great superiority; she unites very singular and contradictory qualities: so much softness, so much energy, such simplicity and fine talents. He did not per-

haps reflect, that the great charm that attended all the words and actions of Matilda, lay in that undefinable power, which nature has given to beauty and innocence, to attract and interest the heart. A practised coquette could not fascinate De Courcy; he sought not pleasure, but happiness; and this had for the first time entered his mind in any other shape than that of military fame. He thought of home; he was convinced his family would admire this singular plant of Canadian growth; and, amused with the suggestions of his fancy, delivered himself to repose.

CHAPTER XI.

Il tombe ; le cor sonne, et sa mort qui s'apprete
 L'enflamme de fureur ;—l'animal aux abois
 Se montre digne encore de l'empire des bois.

ROUCHER, *Les mois*, ch. ix.

IN the morning, Eustace was roused from his dreams of happiness by a noise under his window. It was occasioned by Bellegarde, with the hounds and a company of young Indians, preparing for the chase and making the boats ready to convey the party across the lake, whither horses had been sent to wait their coming.

When Eustace descended, he found the ba-

ron in his hunting-frock and belt, and a *couteau de chasse* in his hand. Matilda had on her Armenian dress, which was new. Her little feet were enclosed in a pair of light mock-asins, beautifully ornamented with porcupine-quills, reaching above the instep, and surmounted with gold fringe. Her dark hair was gathered under a velvet hunting-cap, and she held in her hand a short light fowling-piece. Bellegarde, with her two favourite spaniels, was in attendance upon her. He was armed with a light steel tomahawk: it had been the weapon of a celebrated Indian warrior, slain in battle by his adopted father, the Algonquin chief, and preserved as a trophy in his family, until, at a solemn festival, held for the initiation of Bellegarde, he received it from the old man as a sign of manhood, corresponding with the *toga virilis* of the Romans.

“ Whilst thou art at peace, my son,” said the chief, “ let this weapon be so bright, that its light may conduct a child after the sun has folded himself in his blanket, and sunk to rest in the bosom of the western waters : stain it only with the blood of thine enemies ; on them, let it fall like the lightning that rives the oak.”

Bellegarde had yet no opportunity of employing this savage diploma of initiation ; he knew of no enemies but such as might be hostile to the house of Argenteuil ; and as he always accompanied the baron and his daughter in their excursions, he never failed to carry this arm, which would have punished a look that threatened either the one or the other with danger or insult. The graceful form, regular features, delicate long fingers painted of a pink colour, dark blood-shot eye, darting menacing looks through a bronze-coloured skin,

his long raven hair, plaited into a braid that hung as low as his girdle, riveted the attention of De Courcy.

“ ‘This young man,’ said he, ‘ would make an admirable subject for a painter.’ ” He complimented Matilda on the choice she had made of so suitable an attendant.

Bellegarde, who had not learned to dissimulate, and who felt at the moment, that the stranger might mistake his rank and pretensions to respect, and who, in reality, acknowledged only the baron and his family as his superiors, replied to the observation addressed by Eustace to Matilda,

“ It is as much, sir, my own choice as that of my lady; the lakes and forests, where my fathers led their followers in pursuit of game, are not closed against me ; the son of Ursus Ferox, is no mercenary attendant ! ”

“ This proud boy,” said Matilda, patting him on the cheek, “ is my little knight, always ready to break a lance at my bidding ; go, Bellegarde, seek thy bow and arrows, that Captain De Courcy may judge of thy dexterity to-day as we cross the lake. I think thou wilt bring down a wild-duck.”

The boy, ever anxious to please his mistress, soon appeared with such arms as the savages employed in the chase, before the white men had introduced fire-arms among them.

Breakfast finished, the hunters descended to the shore of the lake, where boats were ready to convey them to the scene of action. The horses and servants stood ready with all the “ *equipage de chasse*” on the opposite side, and the favourite horse of Matilda announced his impatience at the absence of his mistress, who had not forgotten to bring with

her his accustomed allowance of cake. The moment he perceived her approach, his ears laid back, his inflated nostrils and restless movements, were signs of joy, in which Eustace thought there might be danger for his fair companion. The Indian boy smiled at his ignorance ; and Matilda assured him, that she was accustomed to these marks of satisfaction from an animal that was the constant companion of her excursions.

The dogs were cast off, and in a short time the sound of the horn announced that the game was started.

“To horse ! to horse !” said Matilda, leaping on her pony with the agility of a squirrel, and setting off at full-gallop, Bellegarde, on foot, bounding like a greyhound by her side, as she proceeded towards a distant spot, where she supposed the animal would pass.

The baron, who rode at a slow pace, recommended to his companion to ride forward in the direction his daughter had taken; "she always contrives," said he, "to fire the first shot, and owing to the fleetness of her horse, keeps up with the hounds."

"Do you not apprehend danger," said Eustace, "from the young lady exposing herself to the fury of a stag or a wild-boar, whom she might meet in a narrow path?"

"There may be a little, sir; but Bellegarde has a hand and an eye so unerring, that he never fails to disable or kill the animal by a wound between the neck and the shoulder; and he is so light of foot and cunning in taking positions, that he contrives to be close by my daughter when she is exposed."

"I have never seen a wild-boar," said Eustace, "and if you will permit me, I will away and endeavour to assist at the death."

“Go on, sir,” said the baron, “and be careful, for the game is running.”

Thus authorized to join Matilda, without apprehending to be deemed obtrusive, De Courcy set spurs to his horse, and following the direction where the dogs gave tongue, soon reached a narrow path, leading from the wood to the open country. Here he perceived at a great distance running towards him, an enormous boar, foaming at the mouth, followed by the hunters and dogs in full cry. He was armed with a rifle-gun and a *couteau de chasse*; and in order to do fit execution, jumped from his horse, threw the bridle over the branch of a tree, and placed himself directly in front of the beast as it approached. We need not inform such of our readers as are sportsmen, that persons accustomed to this species of little war, never attack the enemy in

front. Matilda saw the danger in which he had placed himself, and presuming that he was himself ignorant of it, called out to him with all her force, making signs to let the boar pass. But Eustace was too intent on his object to hear or see any thing else. He pointed his gun, and waited till the animal came within a few yards of him, and then fired. The ball passed through the eye and neck, and cut through the sinews of the shoulder of the boar ; but such was his great strength and the celerity of his pace, that the death-wound did not prevent him from reaching Eustace, and striking against him with such violence, that he fell at the same moment with the animal he had killed. He instantly recovered, and seeing the boar struggling, drew his weapon, and with a tremendous blow nearly severed the head from the trunk.

“ Bravo ! bravo ! ” cried Matilda, “ nobly

done, — a lucky escape ! Don't you know, Captain De Courcy, that an adversary of this kind is seldom taken down at the first shot, and that he never fails to wound the person who attempts to stop his passage."

"Then I have been more fortunate than prudent," said Eustace, "for I only fell from the shock I received."

Bellegarde, who perceived his boot torn, and, Indian like, concluding that he wished to conceal his wound, told him in a low voice to withdraw a moment, while Matilda conversed with her father, who had by this time joined the party. He assisted De Courcy to pull off the boot, and finding that one of the tusks of the boar had cut into his leg, bound it up with a handkerchief, and then ran towards his mistress, to inform her that the young officer had received a slight scratch.

"Wild boars give no slight scratches," said

Matilda, alarmed; and instantly turning from her father, rode towards De Courcy, who now felt extreme pain, and leaned against a tree with his leg raised. The anxiety with which she inquired whether he had received much injury, was undisguised and serious.

“It is but a trifle,” said Eustace, “and well gotten, since it procures me your kind sympathy.”

“We will return home immediately and have your wound dressed,” said Matilda.

“I pray you do not deprive yourself of the day’s sport on account of such a trifling accident; I will remount; we shall have time to dress the wound when we return to the castle to dine.”

“Bellegarde, bring the gentleman’s horse,” said Matilda.

Bellegarde transmitted the order to a groom, instead of obeying.

“Why not execute my order?” said Matilda with vivacity.

“I serve only my mistress,” said the proud Indian, “there are grooms and domestics for others.”

“This shall not be forgotten, Bellegarde.”

“If the scratch the Englishman has received call forth so much kindness,” muttered Bellegarde, “I shall contrive to break my leg the first favourable opportunity.”

Having asserted, what the unpolished and unreflecting youth conceived to be his personal dignity, his natural kindness returned, and he was unremitting in his attentions to De Courcy. He helped him to reach the boat, placed a bed of fern under his wounded limb, and took so much pains to make him comfortable, that the cloud passed from the brow of Matilda before the party reached the castle.

Although Bellegarde had a moment of re-

penitance for having disobeyed his mistress, he approved of his own conduct upon reflection. His thoughts were perhaps natural in the mind of a proud untutored boy. It was, however, the first time he felt displeased at any order his mistress had given him, but he deemed that order derogatory to his rank, of which he was more tenacious than if he held a position less dependant. It cost him a severe pang to resist her commands; but he held the command unreasonable. Yielding to the conflict between love, devotion, pride and sorrow, tears came to his relief; but he swallowed them as he sat in the boat, in presence of the stranger; his haughty spirit repressed the tribute his sensibility had made to the idol he worshipped. Bellegarde was too young to examine the true cause of his emotions; he had never presumed to think of his young pro-

tectress as an equal; he served her as he had served the image of Madona at the chapel of St. Ann, when he strewed flowers before her shrine on her festival-day. He was jealous of every person who approached her, and he would have tomahawked any person who might venture to perform any of those services which usually belonged to his office. There is nothing exaggerated in this picture of Bellegarde; for notwithstanding that his religious instructors had taught him to comport himself with humility, and keep in due subjection the vindictive notions of his tribe, the spirit of his race dwelt in him, and was constantly excited by the vaunting speeches of old warriors, who still continued to esteem courage as the highest virtue, and revenge as the noblest duty. He knew from the old cook at the missionary-house the secret of his birth, and he

cherished, from the moment he became acquainted with the fate of his family, vague projects of returning, and gathering together the scattered remains of the people of whom his father had been chief. He felt himself humiliated to be adopted amongst strangers, and sought by every possible means to render himself superior to the boys of his age. He studied with the most painful assiduity, was never a moment idle, nor contented himself with a superficial knowledge of any thing he undertook to learn. Whilst other boys were at play, Bellegarde was exercising himself in the use of arms; he would fix a mark on the highest tree, and discharge arrows at it, until he could hit it with certainty; and although he knew nothing of the theory of projectiles, he acquired by practice an efficient skill in giving his arrow an angle of elevation, corres-

ponding with the distance of the object at which he aimed. He would pass whole days in throwing his dagger and hatchet at a saplin, until he could transfix it with certainty. He was equally master of his movements in water and on land; and although he had shewn no indications of cruelty or ferocity, he was an object of terror to the youth of his own age, and of admiration among the warriors of the village. It is usual among the Indian tribes to give every one a name, corresponding with the qualities that distinguish him: that of Bellegarde, was the "HORNED SNAKE," a fabulous creature, whose poison is supposed to be contained in a horny substance that forms the point of his tail, the insertion of which in any living body, produces instant death; even plants are said to die, and trees to lose their leaves, if struck by this formidable reptile.

The Indians pretend, that to swim like a fish, run like a hare, or climb like a squirrel, are no security against the anger of the horned-snake when he pursues his victim; and as Bellegarde's superiority in all dangerous exercises was not contested by any competitor for fame, the Indian name he received was not unaptly applied. He was conscious of the consideration he enjoyed among his red-brethren, and although he was devoted to the family of D'Argenteuil from habit and gratitude, nothing mean or servile entered into the sentiments he entertained for them.

CHAPTER XII.

Q'un ami véritable, est une douce chose !
Il cherche vos besoins au fond de votre cœur ;
Il vous épargne la pudeur
De les lui découvrir vous-même :
Un songe, un rien, tout lui fait peur
Quant il s'agit de ce qu'il aime.

LA FONTAINE.

WHEN the party reached the castle, Bellegarde retired to his chamber, to meditate upon the unlucky incident that provoked the displeasure of his mistress. His heart was ill at ease, and would have willingly exchanged the wound it had received, for that inflicted by the tusk of the boar; for jealousy, produced by the attentions of Matilda to the stranger, had

shewn its green eyes to the poor boy, and troubled the hitherto unruffled state of his mind. Had I been wounded, said he, would she have ordered this stranger to bring my horse?—would she have shewn me so much sympathy?—No. She then deems me his inferior; and why?—what would he, nay, what could he do for her which I am not ready to perform. He killed the boar, and if he did not perish, he owes his escape more to chance than to skill. Then how many have I not slain, and how many would I not encounter, in a place where flight would be impossible, merely to receive from her one look of approbation. But oh! she humiliated me! that frown has planted a barbed spear in my bosom.—Fly, Bellegarde; quit these white people; the shade of thy father points at thee the finger of scorn, and the reproachful denomina-

tion of "*old woman, old woman*," is buzzing in thine ears!—But no; thou must first do such deeds as shall extort thy praise from the most unwilling tongues; and when thou goest forth, thy steps shall be marked with blood!

The poor boy raved, and when the dinner bell rung, he was in bed with a violent fever.

No notice was taken by the baron or Matilda of his absence from the table; but the worthy chaplain, with whom he was a great favourite, went in quest of him, as soon as the family had entered the drawing-room. The boy explained in part the cause of his distress; and the priest endeavoured to console him with assurances, that he had utterly misconceived the intentions of his mistress, who, under similar circumstances, would have given the order to the nearest person, whatever might be his rank. But the blood of the proud Ontario

was not easily cooled; and as the village surgeon had been sent for to dress the wound of De Courcy, it was deemed necessary to extract a considerable quantity of blood from the arm of Bellegarde.

The following morning he was calm, and presented himself as usual to inquire if his mistress had any orders to give him.

Matilda had learned from father Le Clerc the cause of the boy's absence from dinner, and thinking him more than sufficiently punished for the frowardness of his conduct, replied to his demand in a tone of kindness.

“ I do not wish you to leave your chamber to-day, good Bellegarde; father Le Clerc tells me you have been unwell; take care of your health; and if I should ride out St. Marcel will attend me.

“ St. Marcel will not venture, my lady, to

do my duty, whilst I am able and willing to do it myself."

"And why not, if I order him, Bellegarde?"

"Try him, lady, if you will not believe me."

"You are mysterious, Bellegarde; have I not full authority over my servants? he dare not disobey."

"He would pay too dearly for taking my place near my mistress, whilst I am able to follow her."

"Thou art mad, boy, to hold such language; if it please me to select another person, how can you pretend to oppose my will?"

"I pretend to do the will of my mistress; but the privilege her goodness has accorded to me up to this hour, cannot be infringed by another without danger to his life."

Matilda suppressed her displeasure at the

audacity of the young Indian:—it was exaggerated zeal; it was devotedness; besides he was too young, and of too violent a disposition, to listen to cold reason on a point on which he placed his happiness. He was nearly of her own age, and habit had rendered him sufficiently familiar with her to express his sentiments without reserve or hesitation.

He finished the sentence we have just recorded with a tone of resolution, that convinced Matilda that it would be unwise to urge him farther. She knew she had to do with a pet tiger, whose natural ferocity was only covered with the varnish of civilization; and although he was in every respect superior to the young men of his tribe, he was still an Indian. Then,

“ It was thy beauty that provoked me,”

might he have urged, had he dared to speak the truth, or quote Shakspeare to his lady.

“ I have no thought of replacing thee, Bellegarde,” said Matilda; nor have I any occasion for an escort to-day; so follow the regimen prescribed by the doctor.”

She then walked away to continue the train of reflection, that Bellegarde had for a moment interrupted.—She had just quitted her aunt Belrose, much perplexed to comprehend the reluctance of the good lady to paying a visit to De Courcy, whose inflamed limb and a slight fever compelled him to remain in his chamber. The baron had already paid him two visits, and left him such books as might amuse his solitude. The ladies had made lint to dress his wound, and Matilda employed her eloquence in vain to persuade her aunt to visit the sick room.

“ Can you be so totally ignorant, my dear,” said Madame De Belrose, “ of the usages of

society, as to make me, seriously, such a proposition?"

"I am ignorant of the usages of the world, my aunt, but I know what the laws of humanity require; Captain De Courcy is our guest, and the friend of my father, and in these relations entitled to every thing we can do for him."

"Bless me, good niece, how readily you adopt this young gentleman; a young lady can have no friends but her family until she is married."

"And then," said Matilda, maliciously, "according to the infallible laws of the Chantilly code, as many as may happen to please her, since it does not always follow that a woman's husband is her friend."

"These matters, my dear, are regulated by custom, to which you must conform yourself; moreover, if no one else thought it wrong,

the young gentleman himself would deem it a strange innovation."

"If by strange you would say that it would be contrary to the usages of his country, he will have sense enough to perceive that we are more humane and courteous in Canada than they are in Ireland."

But it would not do. Madame De Belrose recollected the wound the Duke of Melun received at the chase, and the scruples of Mademoiselle De Clermont; and piqued herself on the infallibility of her judgment in matters of etiquette.

Dissatisfied with the decision of her aunt, Matilda walked out on the terrace to reflect upon the best means of gaining her father to her own opinion, when she met with Bellegarde, whose conversation did not tend to diminish the vexations of the morning.

"Here," said the artless girl, "are two per-

sons sincerely attached to me; the one would strike his tomahawk into any one who should be employed to do his service, and already shews symptoms of jealousy at the ordinary civilities bestowed on Captain De Courcy; and the other imposes upon me the obligation to abstain from the common duties of hospitality: the first, however, I can comprehend to be the result of inexperience and exaggeration; but to make my conduct subservient to the arbitrary rules of a society so different from the simple, unsophisticated existence of these remote forests, where we have no guide but a moral conscience that never deceives us, is equally absurd and incommodious. Now as I have always found my father's notions at variance with those of my aunt, I shall consult him on the propriety of shewing this stranger all the attentions

that can tend to make a sick chamber supportable."

She found the baron in his study with the family doctor, who soon left them together.

"My dear," said the baron, "our young friend is doing well; and has charged me to express his regret at being deprived of our company at dinner."

"He must be lonesome," said Matilda; would it not be our duty to read to him, and converse with him, and endeavour to make him forget he suffers?"

"It might not be right perhaps, my love, to transport our drawing-room society to the sick chamber; but a visit of benevolence is due to him."

"All our society he cannot have," rejoined Matilda; "for my aunt will not be of the party, nor even consent to my accompanying you."

“ She would first consult the records of the etiquette of Chantilly,” said the baron; but we of the Lake of the Two Mountains are free to make regulations more suitable to our wants and condition; so I shall propose to our guest to pass an hour with him after dinner.”

The proposition was made, and accepted with joy by De Courcy; who already felt desirous to become more intimate with the lovely and interesting daughter of D’Argenteuil.

While this was passing, Madame De Belrose, suspecting that this important question (and what is not important in a castle remote from the concerns and agitations of the busy world?) would be discussed at the dinner table, resolved to have, if possible, the chaplain on her side. With this intent she paid

him a friendly visit; but the shrewd philosopher was on his guard after the first sentence was pronounced.

“ See now, my good father,” said the dame, with a serious face, “ the effects of not following my counsel in the education of our dear Matilda. I always told my brother that a time would come when he would be convinced, that to educate a young girl as if she were to have the liberty of an officer of light cavalry, was an error of which he would repent.”

The priest laid down his spectacles, and, giving her a scrutinizing look, demanded if any thing new had disturbed her.

“ The most singular proposition, my good father; it shocks all my notions of propriety; but the dear girl is too happy that we have no inquisitive cackling neighbours; she would

be the object of general censure ; no one would wed a young woman so ignorant of the dignity of her sex. But it is all my brother's work ; he has only to blame himself for it. Mademoiselle De Clermont, who was, you know, of royal blood, and privileged to do as she pleased, without being accountable to any person, would never have proposed to pay a visit to any young man unless he were her brother ; and that would not be in strict conformity with the usages of persons of rank. Now, sir, you must know, that Matilda has insisted upon my accompanying her to the chamber of the sick officer."

The priest took a pinch of snuff. He had a fixed dislike to exercise appellate jurisdiction in disputed questions between the baron and his sister. It was what the French call *putting one's finger betwixt the bark and the*

tree. Besides, he knew that if Matilda took it into her head that she was doing her duty towards the stranger, she would contrive to gain her father's consent. So having settled these points in his mind, he replied:

“I am aware, madame, that Matilda maintains, that to visit the sick is one of the cardinal works of mercy; and she probably makes no distinction between a sick man who wears a red coat and one who wears a black. Moreover, madame, as you justly observe, there are no prying, ill-natured censors to blame a generous feeling; so that no harm can come of the proposal she has made to you. Have you consulted the baron, madame?”

The good lady having failed to warm in the priest a feeling corresponding with the animated and pathetic appeal she had made to him, changed her tone, and replied, disdainfully:

“No, Monsieur l’Abbé; if I had consulted the baron, I would not have demanded counsel. But I address myself to you, whose duty it is to inform your pupil that a young lady cannot be too circumspect.”

“My duty, madame, is to inculcate in all things a spirit of virtue and piety; and this I have never failed in towards the daughter of my friend. I know her secret thoughts and disposition, and can answer for the purity of both; but as to matters of etiquette, and what might be suitable to particular conditions of society, I have taken no pains to examine them on any other ground than their moral fitness. Besides, madame, you must be aware, that the manners and morals of the society at Chantilly were not submitted to the control of the spiritual teacher.”

“Then, Monsieur l’Abbé, I am to under-

stand, that you do not disapprove of the proposal of my niece?"

"To visit the sick, madame, as I had the honour of observing, is a duty; but you have scruples that I am bound to respect."

"Well, monsieur, we will all go to this sick person together; and thus the responsibility will be removed from Matilda."

"As Matilda intended to perform a meritorious action, madame, she will, no doubt, be pleased to be joined by you and her father."

Thus ended, to the great satisfaction of the priest and the disappointment of Madame De Belrose, one of those little domestic intrigues which so often disturb the placid surface of a country life. The aunt of Matilda was both a kind-hearted and well-meaning woman, though weak in understanding, and

wedded to opinions contracted in her youth, in a society whose habits and opinions have been carried by time into oblivion, as the winds of autumn strip the trees of their foliage. The revolutions that have taken the place of the ancient quietism of the French monarchy, have changed those usages which formed the national character, and render such a person as we are describing extremely rare at the present day. And yet Madame De Belrose only differed from ladies of the present day in the manner of shewing her good qualities.

At dinner, Matilda was silent; Bellegarde looked sullen; the chaplain inattentive to the conversation at the head of the table; and the baron more than usually cordial towards his sister, by way of indemnifying her beforehand for the task he meant to impose on her. When coffee was served, he said, with a tone of authority, " Daughter, send your album to

Captain De Courcy, to amuse him until we come; I have announced to him my intention of paying him a visit this evening; and I wonder, sister, you have not thought of going to see our sick guest."

"Matilda thought of it for me, brother; but I deemed it more regular that you should accompany us."

"Ay, these are your Paris fancies, sister; you remember the time when a lady dared not go alone to a milliner's shop to choose a hat, so little confidence had her parents and friends in her sense of dignity and propriety. Even now, the middling classes of unmarried females, who cannot afford to ensconce themselves in a carriage, escorted by two footmen, are accompanied by the cook or the chamber-maid, to screen their reputation, or watch their motions."

"That, brother, is the fault of the men,

who follow them and stare at them as if they were wild beasts escaped from a menagerie."

"And yet, my good sister, you are continually boasting of the politeness and chivalrous spirit of our people, and, in comparison with them, hold all other very little removed from a state of barbarity. How can men call themselves civilized, whose demeanour, in the street, compels a modest woman to go out under the protection of a footman, armed with a cane, if she be rich enough to pay such an escort; or, if poor, to call the only servant in her family from the domestic labours, to save her from the brutal obtrusion of persons whom she may meet on her way."

"Indeed, I am very far from approving such things, brother. I have often felt the inconvenience of being a woman when I walked in the garden of the Thuilleries, or the park of Ver-

sailles; I have been followed merely because I had a small foot, and especially by officers of cavalry, who never fail to walk round and stare a lady out of countenance, as if they sought to recognize an old acquaintance."

"Think of them as you may, good sister, such officers as you describe, cowardly enough to incommode a woman, whose weakness assures impunity, would make but a poor figure in front of an enemy, since men who have much courage where there is no danger, make the very worst of soldiers: brave men are modest; and modest men protect, but never insult, woman. If I were a legislator, such petty offences should be within the reach of the law; and if I were a woman, every man convicted under the statute should find my doors closed against him, whatever might be his rank and condition in society."

“ The question of guilt, then,” said Madame De Belrose, “ ought to be decided by a tribunal where women should sit in judgment; and upon the simple averment of the party offended.”

“ Undoubtedly,” said the baron; “ they should be treated like hackney coachmen, who are fined for insolence upon the complaint of any person who is sufficiently the friend of good order to bring them to justice.”

“ If you were the sovereign prince of Paris, or London, brother, you would deprive a great number of your subjects of their principal occupation.”

“ God be praised,” said the baron, “ we live in Canada, where such impertinence would not ‘ escape whipping.’ ”

“ Corrupt as you may deem Paris,” said Madame De Belrose, determined to have the

last word, "when our Canadians go there, their friends and families may well write to them about the virtues of a pastoral life, and the freedom of the forest rangers; they think the Opera and Palais Royale, the public gardens, and, above all, the print shops and caricatures, and little feet that they admire and stare at so impertinently, more agreeable than the austerities of their native country."

To this the baron could not reply with a clear conscience; for the seductions of that little world, where scarce any desire can long remain unsatisfied, had kept him from home some years of his youth, the loss of which he has often since regretted.

CHAPTER XIII.

O! shame to manhood, and opprobrious
More to France, than all her losses and defeats.

COWPER.

THE party proceeded to the chamber, where they found Eustace in high spirits, in spite of his inflamed limb. The conversation turned on the event which led to the wound given by the boar; and Matilda shewed a strong tendency to praise the courage of the young officer at the expence of his skill in such exercises. This gave an occasion to Madame De Belrose, to renew the story of the St. Hu-

bert hunt, to speak of times long passed, and entertain the circle with anecdotes of a Court, of which she had been a member. She had once, said she, attracted the attention of the king, but was saved from his farther importunities by the appearance of a brighter star, in the person of her friend, Madame D'Etioles, better known as Duchess of Pompadour.

Cotemporary historians have attributed that lady's connection with Louis the Fifteenth to a Court intrigue, and disfigured the circumstances that led to it; but Madame De Belrose, who had been her friend before her elopement, and allied to the family of her husband by marriage, proposed to correct these discrepancies by relating the facts, of which she had been a personal witness. The baron had long been tired of her "thrice-told tales," but on this occasion, disposed to let her talk for the

amusement of De Courcy, he encouraged her to go on; and as the anecdote places in a strong light the power of an absolute monarch in France, and the impunity with which he might trample on all the rights of his subjects, and violate all the decencies of life, we give it in the words of Madame De Belrose.

“Norman D’Etiolles was one of the happiest men in France; he had a princely fortune, was of a generous and lofty spirit, charitable, kind and hospitable. He spared no pains nor expence to render his chateau agreeable and splendid; and as it was situated on the borders of the forest of Lys, where the princes of Condé and their noble companions hunted the stag and the wild boar, D’Etiolles was frequently honoured with their company. It was a rendezvous of repose; and the illustrious guests made use of it without ceremony, deem-

ing the visit an act of condescension, that amply indemnified the host for the trouble they gave and the cost of splendid collations, of which the hospitable D'Etioules was not sparing.

“He was not born of titled parents, and, consequently, could not appear at Court, nor receive from his noble visitors any return of that hospitality of which he was so prodigal; but he was a convenient and useful friend to many of the young noblemen, whose revenue was not commensurate with their expenses. These dined with him in rather secret select parties; and in order to render their visits less liable to animadversion, often recommended to him to purchase at Court a place of *pousse fauteuil*, or *valet de garde robe*. But D'Etioules was not ambitious; he loved the independence of a private condition, and did not even seek in

marriage an alliance that might have given him pretensions to more consideration than his birth entitled him to claim. He thought that the first gentleman of a family was not more noble than his ancestors; and as the father of D'Etioles was only a banker, the son chose to remain in the same condition in which he was born and had made his fortune.

“Many projects of marriage were formed for him, and the unlucky man had at one time an opportunity of uniting himself with the daughter of the Marquis de la Garonne, who had no money, and in consequence of a slight defect in her shape, and the ravages the small pox had made on a tolerably good face, could not find a match suitable to her rank. He preferred pleasing his own fancy in the choice of a wife, and selected Mademoiselle Poisson on account of her beauty and accomplishments.—

And assuredly if beauty, grace and talents, could supply the wants of patrician birth, she possessed them in a degree of perfection which had no equal in our country.

“As my husband was a remote connection of D’Etioles, I visited them frequently, and had many opportunities of seeing and admiring that splendid woman at her toilette, where alone beauties and deformities cannot be concealed. She was very playful and vain, and would often throw her cloud of auburn hair before her person, which it covered down to her feet; she called it her screen; and it was like a screen of unwrought silk, brilliant as polished gold. Her eyes were large, and of the colour of those given by poets to Minerva. I have never seen such eyes; her skin was like white satin; her voice soft and musical,—that is, its tones conveyed the meaning of the words

it expressed. There was something haughty in the expression of her mouth and nose, analogous to that of the Apollo Belvedere;— in short, she was the finest woman in France; and as dear Mademoiselle De Clermont used to say, nature had left nothing wanting to render her perfect, had she been well born.

“ Her husband had a large estate and a fine castle near Melun, on the banks of the upper Seine. It touched the forest of Senart, where the king frequently went to hunt the stag; and although D’Etioles dare not present himself an unbidden spectator of the royal chase, ladies might appear in their carriages without giving offence. It was the good fortune of Madame D’Etioles to be placed in an open carriage at the entrance of the wood, where the king passed. She had four beautiful grey horses, which at first drew his attention to-

wards us; his majesty supposed, from the beauty of the equipage, that it belonged to some of the princes. So he rode towards us and looked at me as if he would speak. He had seen me in company with the family of the Prince of Condé, to whom the count De Belrose was aid-de-camp. But his attention was soon fixed upon Madame D'Etioules, to whom he said, 'I did not know that our chase would be honoured with the presence of beauty to-day.'

'Sire, we are intruders,' were the only words she spoke; but in speaking she smiled, and shewed the finest teeth you can imagine. The king rode away and seemed in close conversation with his equerry, who in a moment after galloped up to the carriage, and asked her name. From this circumstance I was convinced that his majesty was struck with her

beauty, and on our return to dinner, I complimented D'Etiolles, on the honour his majesty had shewn us ; at which he seemed less pleased than I expected. Ten days after a large party was invited to dinner. I was with my husband, who, although noble, was a relation of D'Etiolles, and notwithstanding the difference of our birth, permitted me to be intimate with his wife. I remarked something extravagantly gay in her manner: she treated the company with an air of protection, which I thought unsuitable in a person of her condition. She spoke with levity of the dull routine of domestic life, and the happiness those must enjoy who are admitted to the familiar conversation of the king. In fine, no person present, myself excepted, could divine the real cause of her change of manner towards her superiors; and yet I carried my speculations

no farther than the mark of distinction shewn by the inquiry of the king, which might as well have been owing to the royal curiosity, excited by the beauty of the equipage, as the beauty of the lady. Her husband was amused at all this, supposing that she only sought to throw a tint of ridicule on things beyond our reach. She called me several times ‘*my dear* ;’ and as the Duchess of Clermont said, after the great event was made public, ‘if I had not been unusually dull, I ought to have concluded, that some intended mark of royal favour was known to her, although others might be yet ignorant of it; more especially too, as her husband was uncommonly gay; although, as I afterwards learned, he was not consulted upon the subject.’

“I should think reserve on that point,” said Eustace, “essential to the execution of the king’s projects.”

“ Truly, no,” rejoined Madame de Belrose ;
“ Etioles would have submitted with less reluctance, had the king honoured him by consulting him ; but although his majesty intended to make a duchess of his wife, he probably had no intention of conferring any favour on her husband. In short, the day passed away agreeably : and as the following was known to have been fixed on by his majesty for hunting in the forest of Senart, we were all engaged by Madame D’Etioles to remain and see the king pass.

“ I remarked, before we set out, that she had so arranged matters, that each lady went to the chase in her own carriage, and that the servants were directed to a rendezvous in a quarter of the forest at a considerable distance from that where we had seen the king before.

“ We heard the horns and the cry of the

hounds, but did not see the king, and after waiting until all was silent, ordered our servants to return to the castle. As we arrived later than the hour fixed for dinner, we found the master of the mansion and some friends, impatient, and dinner was instantly served. Madame D'Etiolles was missing; her husband was out of humour; and at the moment he was about to send a groom on horseback to hasten her return, her carriage entered the park-gate and passed before the drawing-room windows EMPTY! Etiolles alarmed, ran towards the door to inquire after his wife, and every one looked with anxiety towards the carriage, and saw distinctly the coachman put his finger on his lips to impose silence, and without any other answer drove past.

“In a few minutes Etiolles entered with an air of triumph, and bowing to the company assem-

bled, said in a loud and distinct voice, ‘ Madame D’Etioles begs you will excuse her absence; SHE DINES WITH THE KING. She is gone to Versailles in the royal carriage!’

“ We all formed a group round him to learn some particulars of the elopement; but my husband, who had a great deal of sagacity, and whose father had been deputy-governor of the Bastile, gave him a significant nod, and asked him, by way of drawing his attention to that formidable cage of angry husbands, whether he had lately been in the Faubourg St. Antoine. This hint imposed silence, and we sat down to dinner and conversed on indifferent topics, without once recurring to the event of the day.”

“ I have,” continued Madame De Belrose, “ often heard my husband praised for his presence of mind upon that occasion; and the

Duchess of Clermont often told me, that the prince, her brother, did nothing without consulting him, after he had become acquainted with that proof of his wisdom and judgment."

" You remarked," said Matilda to her aunt, " that my uncle Belrose's relation, Mr. D'Eti-oles, selected his wife on account of her beauty. This was probably the reason why he saw her departure and bore her loss with such stoicism?"

" He loved her passionately, on the contrary; and during many months refused to see his friends, and secluded himself from the world in his castle. Every one who knew him blamed the king, and so great was his distress, that news of it reached Versailles; it became an object of sympathy, and in the court-circles nothing else was spoken of. In consequence of this, those who were near the king's

person soon found a remedy for his grief. He was ordered to fall in love with some new object, or at least to affect a great tenderness for some person of notoriety. An opera-dancer, then in vogue, was pointed out as the person the most suitable to divert public attention from Madame D'Etioles; and her husband had the choice of taking this person to his castle to replace his wife, or taking a lodging in the Bastile for himself for the remainder of his life. He chose the former; and this opera-girl gave him two children, and imposed upon him the obligation to render them legitimate in the eyes of the law."

"And how can children who are not born in wedlock be rendered legitimate?" said the inquisitive niece.

"Very easily, my dear: the opera-girl was a German; and as every man who has a little

garden in that country, is at least a baron, she found a poor baron of her own family, who for a good sum paid to him by Etioles—enough, probably, to make barons of all his kindred,—consented to declare himself the husband of the girl and the father of the two children, and so it was registered in the church book at Royaumont. But the better part of the history of poor D'Etoiles is to come.”

“ Let us have it all,” said the baron, who had been dosing while the young people listened with attention to the history of Mr. D'Etoiles.

“ Well then, you must know that this German lady was very beautiful, and at the end of some three or four years, obtained a kind of celebrity for her good conduct, her attachment to D'Etoiles and her children, and the grace and elegance of her manners. In her

society the poor man became by degrees reconciled to the loss of his wife; and although ladies were wanting at his entertainments, his house was constantly filled with artists, men of letters, and persons of wit and fashion. He returned as usual to his castle near Melun, to spend a few months of the autumn; and one day, riding out in an open carriage in the avenues of the forest, the king passed, with a cavalcade of gentry at his heels, some of whom knew D'Etiolles; out of curiosity to examine the lady, these stopped to speak to him, and as every favourite has enemies at Court, those of Madame De Pompadour declared that her beauty was not to be compared to that of the lady whom D'Etiolles had chosen in her place. Four years is a long period to hold captive such a man as Louis the Fifteenth; and as a good book, which Madame de Pom-

padour had not wholly forgotten, admonished her, “ *to put not her trust in princes,*” she became alarmed at the desire expressed by his majesty to see this opera-girl, so much admired for her charms. A messenger was immediately sent off to warn D’Etiolles, that he stood no other chance of preserving the lady, than that of retreating to his chateau of Bail- lon, and giving the public to understand that he had left the country. He took the hint, but determined to vex his wife, he answered the messenger, that he would be too happy to contribute a second time to his majesty’s pleasure and should not stir; he nevertheless decamped precipitately, and lived in seclusion until the death of the king.”

“ The king was a monster, and D’Etiolles a poltroon,” said Matilda.

“ He lost Canada,” said the baron sighing.

“ Your condition, my dear baron, is not the worse for having, in lieu of a depraved and inglorious prince, a government of law and rational liberty, under which your personal honour and dignity are secure from the violence and outrage that Madame De Belrose has just described,” said Eustace.

Madame De Belrose, to whom this observation was indirectly addressed, piqued by the comparison between a British and a French king, felt herself called upon to defend the children of St. Louis.

“ Your king,” said she, is a simple kind of *bourgeois*, without power or splendour, if I mistake not, and does not govern subjects quite so devoted and obedient as our French people.”

“ Our affection for the king is not,” said Eustace smiling, “ carried quite so far in

England as in France : as the highest order of the state, his rank and power are defined by law ; as an individual, he could not, were he so wickedly inclined, violate the sanctity of a home. An English peasant would take personal vengeance on any man, however elevated his rank, who would insult his wife or daughter, and that too, without the least apprehension of being lodged in a Bastile."

" In every country," said Matilda, " there are individuals whose honour is secure in their own hands ; for who can assail with impunity the being that is not afraid to die in defending his personal dignity. If, in general, men would resist the immoral exercise of power, those who are destined to govern society, would be more circumspect in the use they make of their authority."

" These matters, my love," said the baron,

“ depend upon the habits and education of a people. It does not necessarily follow, that individual rights are at the mercy of a king, because he acknowledges no controlling power, or that in a free government, like that of England, they are always secure ; fanatical disciples of liberty, have produced more calamity in one short year, than any single ruler since the time of Nero. The victims of despotism are few, in comparison with those of a lawless and infuriated mob, made up of all the grosser materials of society, obeying no impulse but their passions, and respecting nothing that is marked with distinction or superiority. Our kings in France have not always been wise and virtuous men ; but if we compare the general mass of happiness enjoyed by our people, with that of the most favourite periods of republican and democratic

greatness, we shall have no reason to regret that we were born in France. No tyranny is so atrocious as that of the system-mongers, who treat society as surgeons treat animals upon whom they make experiments, in the name of what they call PRINCIPLE; they are equally engaged in a continual succession of theories, which leave neither man nor beast in a state of repose, and sacrifice all present happiness to some remote and speculative good. What say you, Captain De Courcy, was England not as great, and her children as happy under Alfred and Elizabeth, as during the Commonwealth? and is it any indemnity for the privations and misery of your working people, that they can boast of being independent of a neighbouring lord? It is not the fault of kings, that there are inequalities in society; let those who cry out and clamour against them, call Providence,

not man, to account. If every thing in nature be composed of dissimilar and unequal parts, the evils that may result from such a state of things, are not likely to be cured by the efforts of those who seek to remodel and reduce to a common standard, things that are in their nature unchangeable, unequal, and dissimilar. If the inequality of conditions be an evil, it must be placed beside the other "*infirmities to which flesh is heir;*" and whether it be agreeable, or not, men must submit to it."

"Well, brother," said Madame De Belrose, "your opinions are just such as the good Prince of Condé expressed, when he heard his people criticising the conduct of a marshal of France, who threatened Baron, the famous actor, to administer to his shoulders twenty blows of a cane, for persisting in his refusal to recite before a company, invited on purpose to

hear him ; so Baron put forth all his powers, and every one was delighted.”

This happy illustration produced a general smile, and Madame De Belrose received it as a mark of approbation of her favourite opinions.

When the evening drew towards a close, the little circle broke up, pleased with each other's conversation. Matilda retired to reflect upon the different matters that had been discussed ; and her first sentiment was that of gratitude towards her father, for having educated her with sounder views of the duty and destiny of woman, than those she might have obtained from the prejudices and limited intelligence of her aunt.

CHAPTER XIV.

Physicians wisely make a speech,
Or to the food their fingers reach,
When silence would increase the ill,
Or abstinence their patients kill.

Rose Garden.

THE elegance and urbanity of Captain De Courcy left a pleasing, if not a deep, impression on the mind of Matilda. She remembered Goldsmith's description of "the lord of human kind;" but the "pride in his front and menace in his eye" were so blended with softness and condescension, that they seemed to be secondary qualities, subordinate to strong intellect and goodness of disposition.

“For the amusement and pleasure of a drawing-room,” said Matilda, “I prefer my countrymen; they study more sedulously the art of pleasing; they attach more importance to ease, grace, and politeness, and their education is more made up of knowledge that embellishes; in short, they are formed for society. But for every-day companionship, constancy, and devotedness in all the varying scenes of life, I would take a well-bred and highly moral Englishman.”

Her early prejudices in favour of her countrymen yielded, for the first time, to the influence our young soldier exercised over her.

While she was occupied with Eustace, he was making up the account of the impressions she had inspired during the evening visit: “She possesses,” said he, “the elegance and

grace of her nation, with the good sense and solid virtue of my countrywomen. Her cousin, who it seems is destined to be her companion through life, if he be capable of appreciating her, will be a happy husband; if, on the contrary, he be dull or vicious, she will be an incommodious wife." He felt a restless curiosity to learn all the particulars of this fortunate cousin; and if he had not been afraid of exciting suspicion, and delivering himself to the indiscretion of a gossiping imprudent man, he would have written to his friend, Thornwood, who knew every man in the colony, and every man's affairs, in order to satisfy it. But he already felt too profound a respect for her, to be the cause of making her a topic of mess-table mirth. Perhaps no stronger proof can be adduced of a commencement of love in the bosom of Eustace, than

the fear of hearing the name of Matilda pronounced by unhallowed lips. The first effect of respectful and virtuous affection, is to awaken in the soul all its delicate and generous emotions; and the philosopher who pretended that a man seriously in love was thereby rendered incapable of committing a base action, was not far from the truth. Now, a'though Eustace might readily have obtained every information that could be interesting to him relating to the family of D'Argenteuil, and the person selected by the baron to become the husband of his daughter, he could not resolve to expose such matters to the gaze of the vulgar, by seeking to satisfy a curiosity natural to a young man in his situation.

Bellegarde, who did not suspect that the indisposition of the strange officer could be

a motive for suspending the accustomed excursions of his mistress, presented himself as usual to receive her orders. She seemed thoughtful and pre-occupied; but replied to his demand in a manner so kind and condescending, that she felt no disposition to go abroad, that he ventured to expostulate.

“It is fine weather, my lady; there is plenty of game; and your pony and spaniels would be the better for exercise.”

“I cannot ride to-day, Bellegarde; my father wants me in his study; I have letters to write; besides, I feel no inclination to be amused.”

The Indian bowed, and retired.

When Matilda was alone, she entered into a self-examination. “Why,” said she, “am I so serious, so irresolute? I have nothing to interrupt my customary avocations or amuse-

ment. I have no duty to perform. I cannot be of any use to the sick officer, nor even visit him until evening." But it was in vain she sought to disengage her thoughts from the sick-room. She constantly recurred to the expressions, the looks, and opinions of De Courcy. He was the finest young man she had ever seen, perhaps the only one who had ever for a moment made any impression upon her. Unaccustomed to question her heart, she was at a loss to render herself the least account of its sensations. The interest excited by her family circle, and the objects that surrounded her, in so remote a situation as the Lake of the Two Mountains, had never for a moment suspended her rides, walks, and studies. It could not be these that gave a new colour to her perceptions; these did not make her grave, thoughtful, melancholy, or

unwilling to be importuned. She had no distinct idea of her situation, for it was the commencement of a new and unknown sensation.

Matilda had made, with the aid of good masters, considerable progress in literature. She had a fine memory, good taste, and a poetical imagination. She had given many proofs of this in birth-day odes, presented to her aunt and father; but although the baron was delighted with the feeling and harmony of her compositions, he never encouraged such efforts, but always met them with the chilling question of the great French academician, "*What does that prove?*" He directed his daughter to serious studies; and, at eighteen, she had become conversant with French, English, and Italian literature; and could cite upon every occasion such passages as illustrated and ornamented the subject of conver-

sation. But all this was without excitement; and she felt the loss of the moments that were not spent in the conversation of the agreeable and accomplished stranger. In the short space of time she had passed in his society, Eustace had but little opportunity of displaying the riches of a mind highly cultivated; but there was an eloquence in his expressions, and a force and variety in his reasoning that could not fail to please and captivate her. She wished that the hours might pass rapidly away, and bring round the interview of the evening. We leave our readers to divine the cause of this sudden change of the daily habitudes of our young and innocent inhabitant of the sequestered castle of D'Argenteuil. We fear that the

“ *Enfant au vol léger, à la flèche rapide
Dont le rire est cruel et la gaité perfide.*”

the EROS OURANIOS of Plato had planted a poisoned arrow in a heart, hitherto accessible only to filial affection and general benevolence. The Indians tell us, that when a slight wound is inflicted on a deer, it quits the herd and seeks solitude and looks melancholy. We do not pretend to establish a parallel; but certain it is, that Matilda remained alone in her apartment in a very thoughtful mood the remainder of the day. She looked over her sketch book, tried to read, changed her book often,--perhaps thought much, and feared her own thoughts, and awoke from her reveries little satisfied with her waking dreams. But these are secrets of the *boudoir*, which it is not necessary to pry into for the better understanding of our history.

The cogitations of Eustace ran very nearly in the same course, until he was interrupted

by the family leech, who called to dress his wound, and whose curiosity and communicativeness being at least equal to his skill, gave the patient a full hour's amusement.

He spoke with an air of superiority of the cures he had performed, and the veneration in which he was held by the inhabitants of the country; but expatiated on his intimacy with the baron and his family, in such a manner as to inspire a belief that his sagacity and judgment were the guides of all the actions of any moment that related to the old nobleman.

“I have, captain, with God's help, preserved the whole family in health these twenty years; and the young lady would, but for my care, have long since followed her mother to the grave. She was delicate, sir, very delicate, when young, and our climate, sir, is severe for young ladies; they are subject to neurosis in all its forms; to phthisis pulmonalis. She had

an attack of atrophía ablactarorem, on account of the too early death of her nurse; and this, sir, is often fatal."

"The efficacy of your prescriptions, doctor," said Eustace, "is very apparent in the fine health of the young lady."

"Yes, sir; but it is out of friendship to the baron that I have done so much, and I hope to live to prescribe for his daughter's children."

This observation opened a door into which Eustace rushed like an arrow.

"It is extremely probable that you will prescribe for her children, doctor, unless she be an enemy to matrimony, since she is now of an age to render such an event possible before your death: and yet, in this secluded spot, it would, methinks,—it would not be easy to find a suitable match for so accomplished a young woman?"

“ Oh, as to that matter, captain, the party is already found.”

“ Already! doctor. She is very young to have decided so important a step.”

“ Lord, captain, she never decided any thing about it. She was never consulted. The baron brought her up to believe, that a young person of quality only wants a husband to maintain her rank in society and manage her fortune. So, sir, as he had no son, he adopted his nephew, who is destined to be the husband of Matilda, and perpetuate the family name and honours. This young man, sir, is now in England. He is very partial to your country, sir ;—does not like solitude and rural felicity;—is what you call a gay fellow.”

Eustace, already too much interested in the subject of conversation, and finding that the doctor only wanted to be encouraged, ventured to push his inquiries a little farther.

“Does the young cousin promise to be such a companion for the young lady as her father might desire?”

“On that matter,” replied the leech, “the baron keeps his opinion to himself. There is a necessity that this union take place, the baron having no male relation, as I said before; and if his nephew’s wild oats were all sown, the marriage would not be long delayed; but there are some obstacles that time will soon remove.”

“Some matters relating to fortune?” said Eustace, whose curiosity was not satisfied.

“I perceive, sir, you have heard something of this gentleman at Montreal.—Giddiness of disposition; a good fortune all spent;—loves boxing, horse-racing and good dinners; learned all this from the military,—no offence, Captain De Courcy—but he thought his own country-

men unfashionable; so, sir, he gave what he called ‘ noble feeds’ to the officers; lost his money at play, and became the humble intimate of a man of rank, who gave him hopes of obtaining a place in England, where he now lives as he can. The poor fellow, sir, gave out that he left the country to become a man of consequence in England; but the truth is, Mr. De Bertinval was ashamed of the poverty he brought on himself, and went away because he could no longer find means to live as he had been accustomed to do with the officers at Montreal. He hopes to acquire new habits, and profit of such lessons of adversity as a very small income in a strange country are likely to furnish. On this condition his uncle will realize all the promises made on the subject of the inheritance and the marriage.”

“ And pray, doctor, does the young lady

know these particulars relating to her future husband?"

"She only knows he has spent his fortune; his person, character, and disposition, she has had no opportunity of judging. The baron himself is but imperfectly informed on these points, in consequence of his retired life and unsuspicious disposition. The nephew has been seldom at the castle since he came of age; and for many years letters have been received from him, which have been satisfactory to the family."

"Then his want of fortune, doctor, seems not to constitute an objection on the part of the young lady?"

"No, sir; she would pay no attention to his poverty, provided every thing else pleased her; but she would rather bestow on him half the inheritance of her family than marry

him, if she had a bad opinion of his principles."

"She probably likes him, since she entertains the project of uniting herself to him?"

"I cannot say, sir. He was a fine-looking man before he went to Europe; but as she was then too young to think of him as a husband, it is probable the task of making a conquest of her heart, remains to be performed."

"He is probably a favourite with the other members of the family?"

"Yes, sir, with the exception of the chaplain, father Le Clerc, who always shrugs up his shoulders when he is named; but as the baron is resolved to execute his plan, the priest will not be consulted."

Eustace having obtained all the information he wanted, thanked the doctor for his long

visit, and promised to observe his instructions for the cure of his wound.

Left alone, he resumed the train of his reflections.—What a pity, said he, that so fine, so interesting a creature, should become the property of such a man, by the simple right of transfer, when her taste and affections are probably not, nor ever can be, a party to the contract. I am not a candidate for wedlock; if I were there is nothing I would so much desire, as to render myself worthy of such a treasure. Such a companion through life, to love, sympathize with, and console me; such a fond object, to whose pleasure every action would be subservient, whose approbation and esteem would be the most grateful reward of every effort, and whose society would constitute the principal charm of my existence, I could scarce find in such perfection as the daughter of

D'Argenteuil. But my trade is war; my sword the only fortune I possess; and there is yet no laurel wreath round it to make it balance the possessions of Matilda D'Argenteuil. I am too, a visitor in her father's house; and the society of a being so fascinating, might soon cause me to form wishes, alike unsuitable to my pride, my poverty, and my duty towards a family where I am treated with so much kindness.

To yield to any strong passion would be an act of weakness; to love would be worse than weakness,—it would, in my situation, be criminal, especially if I could suppose it possible to communicate it. Why should I permit myself to utter a word or entertain a wish that could possibly derange the projects of this noble family.—Far from Eustace De Courcy be the unworthy thought. I am their friend: in my

social relations with them their happiness, not mine, ought to be my guide; and this sentiment is a thousand times more elevated, more pure and disinterested, than any other beauty could inspire. With Matilda I shall be circumspect, —reserved; my love for her shall be without wings;—friendship,—friendship only.

With this heroic resolution did Eustace combat the first invasion of an attachment, from which it was difficult, if not impossible, to escape at his age, under the same roof with Matilda.

CHAPTER XV.

And hope—life's chequering moonlight—smiled asunder
The doubts that, cloud-like, o'er him sought to roll.

BULWER.

THE family circle removed from the drawing-room to the chamber of Eustace, and Matilda, now more familiar with the stranger, took a larger share of the conversation. Desirous to correct or ratify her own opinions, she compared the literature of her nation with that of England.

“ I prefer your poets to our own, with the single exception of your dramatic authors, Captain De Courcy, and these I have been

taught to consider equal in sublimity, greatly superior in taste, and classical elegance. I admire Shakspeare ; but his beauties can scarcely redeem the vulgar, and often trivial, coarseness with which they are mingled. It is painful and disgusting to seek diamonds in the mire, of which a certain portion will stick to one's hands, whatever pains one may take, to efface the stain. I believe you give Milton the next rank on the scale of genius; and yet there are many passages in his great poem that are unworthy of so mighty a mind, and of the subject itself. How could he send the Messiah to a closet in the armoury of heaven to look for a compass, to trace his work? How could he disguise Lucifer in the shape of a toad, and fire off cannon in heaven, with angels serving as bombardiers? Then the marriage of Death and Sin, and the ser-

pent's issue of this amiable union! National vanity may embroider such things with its favourite colours, but they are ignoble, in spite of prejudice and popularity. In our first-rate French poets, I can find none of these abominations. They have, if you will, less majesty, a more limited range of genius, or the instrument they wield is less powerful than that which your richer and graver language places at the disposition of your literary men; and owing, probably, to this cause, we have no monument of literary distinction in the highest order of poetry, unless you will allow us to call the *Henriade* an epic poem. Of your English poets, Pope is the favourite in France. His flight is very high, and however long it may last, his wing remains unwearied. He has passed through various regions of intellectual glory, and al-

ways returned laden with trophies of the highest order and brightest colours.

“ If the studies of woman were limited to one language only, I would choose that of England, especially for light reading, which exercises so extensive an influence on the morals of society. Your novels are greatly superior to our silly and uninteresting, and often disgusting, tales of real or fictitious love; which, far from improving, only serves to corrupt the mind, and which a lady cannot acknowledge she has read, without blushing as if she had committed an offence against the decencies of life, or the precepts of religion; whereas the far greater part of your romance writers inculcate virtue and moral rectitude, and make both triumphant in their struggles with vice and passion. But I am giving you my father’s, rather than my own,

opinion on French novels: he always told me, that the best written of them were vulgar and indecent; and, as we do not seek for what we are not willing to find, I have scarcely any in my library."

"I cannot," said Eustace, "defend our great national poet from the charge you bring against him, in better language than that employed by one of our greatest English moralists, who called his defects '*spots in the sun*.'" Shakspeare lived at an epoch when custom authorized a great deal of what is reprehensible in his writings. '*Vice had not then lost half its deformity by being deprived of all its grossness.*' Had he violated the laws of literary pudicity, sanctioned, or rather formed by public taste and opinion, he could not have been the favourite author of a virgin queen, by whose special order

he wrote one of the most exceptionable of his plays, 'The Merry Wives of Windsor.' As to the puerile passages in 'Paradise Lost,' Milton, like Homer and Virgil, sometimes 'nodded.' Even Horace, the most correct of all the ancient poets, tells us of bad dinners on his journey, and the quarrel of the vulgar Pupilius, whose words are pus and vinegar; and when he tells his patron that if he place him among the lyric poets, he will strike the stars with his sublime forehead, we must admit that such nonsense only escaped the pen in the ardour of composition."

Matilda, like every good and well-bred woman, was desirous to please her guest. She had, however, ventured upon ticklish ground; for it is almost as dangerous to attack favourite authors as national honour; but there was in her criticism such a spirit

of good faith and impartiality, that Eustace forgot, in his admiration of the speaker, all his national susceptibilities.

During the indisposition of Eustace, his kind friends held their evening conversation in his chamber, and by the time his wound was healed, he had become as intimate with them as if he had been born in the castle. Every interview he had with Matilda, left on his mind a deeper sense of her noble and exalted nature; he was charmed with, and attached to her, in proportion as he had opportunity of judging her merits. He endeavoured to convince himself, by all that sophistry which love forges to palliate or disguise the aberrations of the heart, that it was only friendship, pure friendship, he entertained for her: nevertheless, as the reasonable period of his sojourn at the castle

drew near, he was nervous, discontented, and irresolute. A man in ordinary circumstances could easily render himself an account of these emotions; but Eustace had resolved not to be in love, and would not admit, even to himself, that his reluctance to leave the castle had any cause stronger than his will and his reason. Still he felt that he had lost much of the gaiety and cheerfulness he had brought into their first meetings; he grew embarrassed when he spoke to her; and his mind often wandered from the subject of conversation, and produced such disjointed and irregular discourse, as the French very pertinently denominate “*conversation à baton rompu*.” This was not unnoticed by Matilda, who, true to the instinct of her sex, whether in crowded city or lonely valley, perceived the effect that her presence had upon the

young soldier. In order to remove every trace of doubt from her mind, she would lead him to talk of his home, his family, his profession; but nothing could bring him to speak freely, nor, indeed, did he dare to speculate on the cause of his apparent absence and melancholy. He was in a false position. He resolved, finally, to tear himself away; to make a great and reasonable effort; and as a review of his regiment had been announced for the following week, he boldly declared that his presence with his company was indispensable.

This was decision, at least; it gave a momentary relief to his heart, and, proud of his triumph, he descended the great stairs, and entered the park. It was his first appearance without the castle walls since he had been wounded, and he was joyfully greet-

ed by Bellegarde, to whom he communicated his intention of going to Montreal. The brave Indian had forgotten the emotions of jealousy to which an apparent preference of Eustace by the young lady had contributed; and proposed to conduct him down the rapids of the Black River in his canoe, as the most commodious and least fatiguing mode of conveyance. Eustace accepted the proposal with pleasure; and, in a conversation of an hour during their walk in the park, conceived an high opinion of the intelligence and principles of the young savage, who felt disposed to love and admire the officer more than any white person whom he had seen at the castle on a visit to his protector.

Madame De Belrose soon joined them, and entered into conversation with Eustace on the misfortune that had deprived him of the ordinary enjoyments of the country.

“It has abridged the pleasures of the chase, madame,” said Eustace, “but it has more than indemnified me, in drawing towards me the kindness and attentions of the amiable inhabitants of the castle.”

“I am sorry your recovery, Captain De Courcy, only serves to deprive us so soon of your company.”

“A longer residence, madame, would only render our separation more painful to me. As a soldier, I ought to be ashamed of the reluctance with which I return to my duty.”

“Well, sir, this is amiable in you; more especially as our life is without variety.”

“It suits my taste and disposition, madame, and is, compared with the dull routine of a garrison-town, a perfect paradise.”

“A paradise without houris, sir! but it will be more animated in a few months; and now

that you are a friend of the house I will tell you the cause."

"I divine it, perhaps," said Eustace, greatly agitated, and employing all his force to conceal his emotion.

"Very probable, captain; every one knows the intention of my brother; but had he permitted me to take my niece to France, I could have made a very different match for a girl of her fortune and rank."

"If the choice her father has made, be such a one as will correspond with her own taste and inclinations, madame, she may enjoy more real happiness in this secluded spot, where she possesses the influence and authority of a sovereign, and uses both so benevolently as to be loved and admired by all who surround her, than in the circles of more ostentatious and fashionable life, where virtue is derided,

and intrigue and amusement push content and tranquillity from their natural abode,—the heart of a virtuous woman.”

“ Really, Captain De Courcy, your ideas are those of another world: young ladies marry to enjoy their liberty, to bid defiance to scandal, and do something for society; and I am quite sure that my nephew will never be satisfied to spend his life in this northern arcadia: dine with the curate and village doctor; settle family disputes among his farmers, and rear little citizens for his Britannic Majesty. But here comes Matilda. I will leave you to finish your walk.”

“ So you leave us after to-morrow, Captain De Courcy,” said the amiable girl. “ The Lake of the Two Mountains has no charms to detain you a little longer on its shores.”

“ My destiny has so ordered, mademoiselle,

and yet I beg you to be assured, that I leave it with more regret than is perhaps reasonable in a man, whose profession ought to wean him from every thing like local affection."

"But you will soon return?" said she, as she adjusted the leaves of a rose, on which she fixed her eyes as she spoke.

"A soldier cannot indulge the hope of enjoying the society of his friends for any length of time: a thousand events may dispose of me very differently from what I might wish; and yet," said he, hesitating, "if I could do as I wish, I would pass my life here. It is an enviable existence."

"So I have told my aunt a thousand times," said Matilda; "but she sighs after France; compares our forest scenery and savage life with the enchanted gardens of Versailles and Chantilly; and for the last year, talks of nothing but returning to her favourite haunts."

“ She has given me some reasons for believing such an event probable, if not immediately, at least before many years. Family arrangements, she believes, will compel her to leave Canada ; until they take place, she may deem it her duty to remain with her niece.” This moment was big with interest, and Eustace, looking full in her face, sought to discover what, no doubt, he would be unhappy to learn.

“ She is too kind, too anxious about me,” said Matilda, “ and one of the effects of her solicitude is to give herself and her niece unnecessary pain.”

This was not precisely the point upon which Eustace wished Matilda to speak, therefore, making a great effort, he continued,

“ It is impossible, mademoiselle, that she should be indifferent on a matter of such importance, as your future establishment.”

“ But I am the most happy being on earth, and my aunt ought to reflect, that there can be no motive to change a condition that leaves me nothing to desire. My father imposes no restraint upon my actions. In this retreat I am not obliged to regulate my conduct by the thousand rules that society has imposed on its members. I cannot, it is true, hope that my parents will live for ever ; and they urge this as a reason why I should do something for the interests of our house, and marry my cousin, whom I scarce know ; but as all this, in my opinion, resolves itself into the question of my happiness, I can yet comprehend none greater than that which I enjoy.”

“ Then your heart,” said De Courcy, seems little inclined to second the project of your family ?”

“ My heart ! if you mean by that word, a

predilection in favour of my cousin Bertinval, is perfectly ignorant of the matter. I have been brought up with a belief, that he was one day to be my husband, and that in such matters my heart was not to be consulted ; but I scarcely remember the person of my cousin ; nor have I examined seriously, whether I ought to reject or adopt that dogma of paternal authority, which disposes of a child as of any other commodity of which one is proprietor. All I know is, that I am perfectly content, and that so long as I remain so, I shall not be inclined to risk the loss of a positive, in pursuing a speculative, good."

" It is wisely resolved," said Eustace, " and if I had the happiness of being your brother, I would second you with all my power."

" Then you have friendship enough for me to consult my personal satisfaction more than

the cold, though perhaps, reasonable views of my father?"

"Undoubtedly I have, if I dare take the liberty to avow it."

"And why not avow," said the frank and guileless girl, "what you feel?"

"Your father might disapprove such an indiscretion, mademoiselle; might attach to it an importance which you do not see."

"Then, sir, no person is to presume to like me without first asking the permission of my family. This is too rigorous. My father presented you as his friend; I approve of his choice," said the fearless girl, "and when you return to your garrison, do not forget the inhabitants of this wild place."

He took her tiny hand and raised it to his lips. He was too deeply affected to say all he felt. He might say too much for the peace of

the angelic being, before whom he stood, and the honesty of his intentions imposed silence on his emotions.

It may be that some of our readers are squeamish enough to blame Matilda for shewing such kind attentions to De Courcy; and we pray these to recollect the artless disposition and unsophisticated education of the noble daughter of D'Argenteuil, to whom speech was not given to conceal her thoughts.

When we consider the favourable impression the mind and person of Eustace had made upon her, it is matter of surprise that she kept within such sober limits; but it is probably in the nature of woman, however candid and innocent she may be, to be parsimonious of professions she is the most inclined to make. She had said enough to keep despair from preying on the mind of De Courcy; and where

despair does not enter, hope takes root. Her independent spirit, her utter indifference to the success of the project of her father for her establishment; the possibility that many unknown accidents might intervene, formed in the distant horizon a rainbow, in whose tints Eustace saw enough to cheer and encourage him. Strange inconsistency of the human heart, to seek that which it dare not accept, were it attainable; to hope for a position totally incompatible with that in which we have voluntarily placed ourselves, and still to demand of heaven, that “cruel something unpossessed,” whose possession would scarce fail to create new projects and desires.

Eustace had blamed his brother officers for incumbering themselves with families; he held that a military, was incompatible with a domestic life! that their respective duties must be in

perpetual contradiction with one another: he had even applied these reasons to his own condition, and resolved to seek glory and distinction in the career of arms, and yet the fascination of the interesting Matilda, made him forget all his wise resolutions. He thought it was only friendship he felt for her;—but is not friendship at two-and-twenty, love,—love, perhaps without wings, but at all events love? Such self-delusion is so common an infirmity, that we may excuse De Courcy; he is not the first whose rectitude of intention has made a treaty with tenderness, in which inflexibility took no part.

END OF VOL. I.

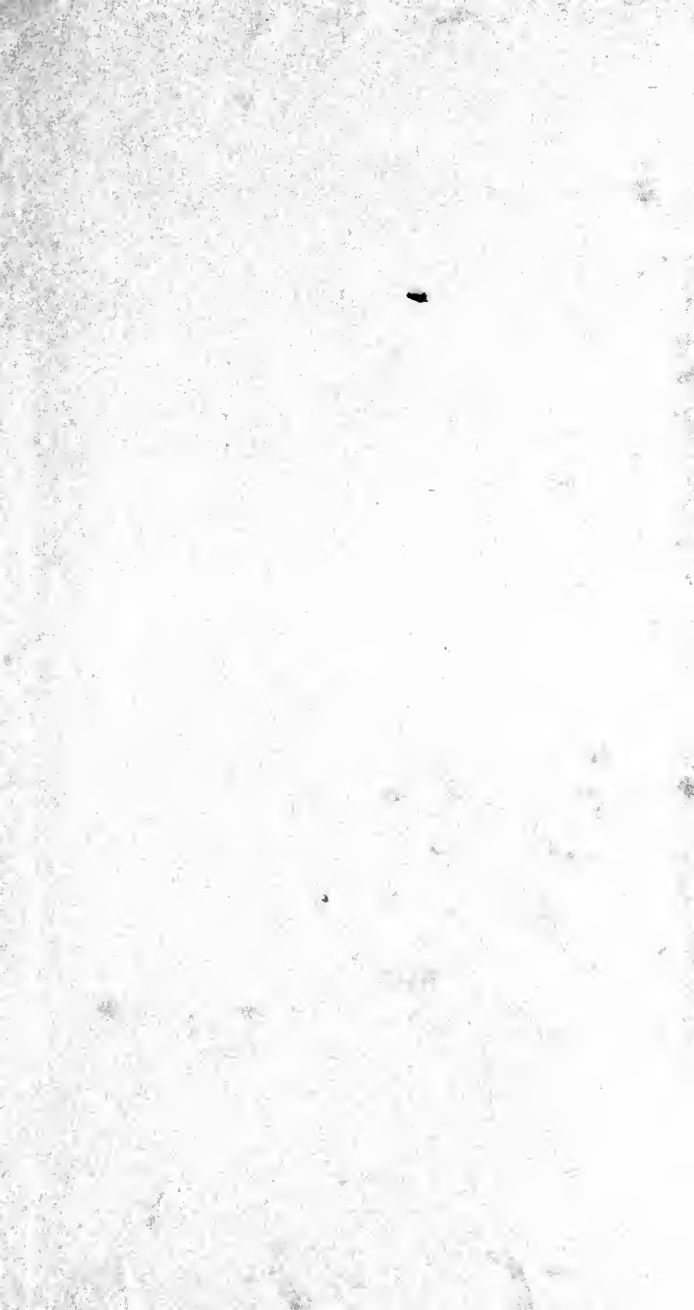
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